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ULSON KERNAHAN.

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WITH A FOREWORD BY
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FOREWORD

I ASK that every one, into whose hands this little book may come, will give it his most earnest consideration, and will put to himself this question :—

“Am *I* fitted to do anything for the defence of my country, should my services be required? *If not, why not?*”

Robert, Jr.

TO
SIR ARTHUR CONAN DOYLE

MY DEAR DOYLE,

In this little book I speak of the "Man of Letters," as distinct from the mere "literary man."

You were in my mind at the time, and to you, a fellow-Irishman, of whose splendid achievements, splendid pluck, and splendid patriotism, every loyal Irishman is proud, I dedicate these pages in token of a friendship of nearly twenty years.

C. K.

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AN AUTHOR IN THE TERRITORIALS

THE FIRST TIME IN UNIFORM

“SOMEONE’S left a door open at the Zoological Gardens, and a blooming giraffe ’as escaped, and is trying to disguise hisself by swapping or sneaking a suit of khaki.”

The words were shouted by a butcher boy to another butcher boy on the opposite side of the street, as the door of the house closed behind my six feet one inch figure, clad for the first time in the kharki uniform of the Royal Sussex Regiment.

The typical butcher boy is a sort of Blue Uhlan, waging guerilla warfare against us all. He charges us Cossack-wise in his cart, as we try to cross a road, or swoops down upon us, round a street corner, with the suddenness and the unexpectedness of a pouncing hawk. Afoot, if he be not pelting us with a catapult, he is scattering orange peel or banana rind for our

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undoing. On frosty mornings he is busy coaxing, conjuring and polishing the paving stones outside our front door to the slipperiness of sheeted ice, what time his wooden tray is incontinently lodged at the very spot between the railings where the projecting handles must bark our shins or pitch us down our own areas.

As it is my intention to volunteer for active service in the event of a war, it is possible that I may one day be asked to describe my first brush with the enemy, and my first feeling when coming under fire, in which case I shall reply, "The first enemy I was called upon to face was a butcher boy, and my feelings were murderous." For a shy and nervous volunteer recruit, appearing in uniform for the first time, to step out of his own door to meet such an enemy lying in wait for him, was as if a newly-hatched chicken had blundered out of its shell, only to find a hungry cat superintending the process.

Masking the butcher's fire by a masterly flank movement, I strode up the street, doing my best (a poor best!) not to look self-conscious. Was it my morbid fancy, or was it a fact that the whole street—not to say the town—knew that this was my first time in uniform, and was proportionally amused and interested? Ours is a broad street, and a quiet

street, in the ordinary way, but now it seemed suddenly to narrow down to an avenue of windows, and the windows to be all eyes. I seemed to be running the gauntlet of serried ranks of grinning faces. Was anything wrong? Anxiously I looked myself up and down—as far, that is, as one *can* look oneself up and down without the aid of a looking glass, for Providence, no less than the War Office, is apt sometimes to be caught napping. It was thoughtful of Providence to put eyes in our faces, that we may use them to see that nothing is wrong with our extremities or with our bodies; but in view of the fact that our faces are the most important part of us, it was a little thoughtless of Providence to neglect to furnish us with, say a tiny mirror, placed in the palm of our hand, or with an odd eye at the end of a finger tip, so that we can satisfy ourselves that nothing is wrong with our faces.

As Providence has also, among its other omissions, forgotten to institute a Department, to which any member of the public, who happens to have a grievance, may direct a complaint—there to be duly acknowledged and straightway pigeon-holed—I decided to let Providence alone, and to ease my overcharged feelings by being sarcastic at the expense of the more vulnerable War Office, which presumably is

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responsible for that preposterous plaything which we know as a "swaggerstick." A swaggerstick, I may explain, is an absurd little regimental cane which one carries when appearing in uniform. It is a cross between a toothpick and a luggage pencil; and as a pocket edition of a carpet beater, is not without its uses for slapping the dust out of one's kharki knee-breeches. As soon as I take it up I am insanely possessed with the idea that I ought to be conducting a band or using my swaggerstick as a conjurer's wand for the performance of tricks, whereas it is really intended, I understand, to lend a soldierly smartness to one's bearing. At that moment, however, I was doing my best not to appear too military. No one is so apt to overdo things as your amateur. The amateur author often affects an aggressively literary "get-up," while the man of letters, who lives by his pen, dresses like any ordinary gentleman. Blue serge and reefer jackets are more frequently worn—"A Life on the Ocean Wave" is a more favourite song—in the yachtman's club-house or cabin than in the foc'sle of the mercantile marine; and your civilian soldier sometimes affects a frowning fierceness, a stiff uprightness of bearing, compared to which the scarred veteran of many campaigns might very well pass for a curate.

Hence, as I say, I was anxious *not* to appear too appallingly military, and was considering the possibility of concealing my swaggerstick by slipping it up my sleeve, when I was suddenly struck by the size of my feet. In civilian costume, and when they are becomingly curtailed by well-cut trousers, my feet are, I try to persuade myself, rather small for a man of my size. But seen thus—encased in brown, broad-welted marching boots, set at the end of tapered putties, my feet seemed to me to resemble snowshoes. But it was these same tapered putties which were my final undoing. The possible undoing of my putties, in public, was so horrible to contemplate, that I had strapped them as tightly around my legs as if they had been bandages to stop bleeding. Had there been any bleeding to stop, they would have done their work effectually, but being balked of their natural use as surgical bandages, they decided that in order to justify their existence—and to do something for a living—the next best thing they could do would be to stop the circulation of blood in my legs. The consequence was that I soon began to walk like a man who has both legs in splints, and, long before I reached the Drill Hall, I felt like a man who has both legs in the grave. Could I hold out? That was the question, or would my legs give way

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under me, and let me down ignominiously in the street? As I turned the corner of the road leading to the Drill Hall, straddling stiffly along, and feeling as helpless as a babe in its swaddling clothes, I encountered a woman with a squalling child.

"Be quiet, do!" said the woman, giving the luckless youngster a vigorous shake of the arm. "Here's a soldier coming, and if you aren't good, he'll kill you!"

The threat sufficed. With dropped jaw and eyes starting out of its poor little head, the unfortunate child choked back the sob in its throat, to stare in frozen terror at the dreadful "soldier" as he disappeared—his own troubles over—through the doorway of the Drill Hall. And all the time I verily believe that the soldier was the more frightened of the two!

WHY I JOINED THE TERRITORIAL ARMY

I N my last chapter I told the story of my first appearance in uniform. In this I propose to say why it was that I—by profession a writer of books and a lecturer—decided, late in life, to join the Territorial Forces.

First, I should like to say that it was *not* in search of “copy.” It would ill become me to speak ungratefully of bookmaking, for bookmaking—bad as my own bookmaking may be—has found me and mine in food and raiment, has laid the foundation of friendships that I count among the best gifts of life, and has given me the means of living contentedly, if simply, within sight of the sea and sky and green fields that I love. I admit that there are callings—the doctor’s, the statesman’s, the soldier’s—which seem to me to make worthier claim upon one’s manhood, but a writer of books it was apparently decreed—for my own sins or for someone else’s—that I should be, and as a writer of books I have no in-

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tention of decrying the profession which has given me a living.

All the same I must confess to small sympathy with the writer of books who goes peering and sniffing about God's world and among God's creatures for no other reason under the sun than to make copy. Live your life to the full, for life's sake only, and because life is infinitely worth the living, say I. And if your calling be that of the writer, and you be minded thereafter to write of life's humours or of life's tragedies as you found them, then do so, not from the point of view of a writer of books, but as one who has sorrowed, loved, laughed, and pitied, and has shared, with the rest of God's creatures, this wonderful *something* which we call Life. And if, as I say, you write a book about the microscopic scrap of life which you explore, and upon which you have, so to speak, specialised, then write of life itself just as you saw it with your own eyes. Some great man once said that Art and Literature should seek to hold the mirror up to Nature. I do not agree with that great man; but even if the saying be true, that is no reason why men and women should walk about with bits of looking-glass screwed at right angles to their eyes, squinting sideways at the reflected image of

a world which all the time they can see for themselves.

And lastly, to bring this homily to a close, and to sum up the whole matter, if you elect to make literature your profession, then seek rather to be a man of letters than merely "a literary man," remembering always that manhood comes before bookmaking, that literature counts incomparably less than life.

I have said that my reason for joining the Territorial Army was not to make copy; and I wish I could pretend that patriotism and patriotism only was the original cause of my enlistment, but to say so would not be to speak the unadulterated truth.

To be frank, then, I joined the Territorial Army from shame. I was ashamed to think that if war came, and England were in danger, I, an able-bodied man, should have to watch others go out to take a man's part in the defence of the country, while I remained behind with the women. I am ashamed now that the shame was so long of coming—that I did not earlier in life realise the necessities of National Defence. On that score there may or may not be something to put forward in excuse, but I shall not enter upon it here, and judgment must go against me by default.

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Once one *does* join the Territorial Army, however, one finds oneself becoming imbued with the spirit of patriotism which animates so many of the officers and men. Some joined, no doubt, in the first place, because of the uniform, some merely because they thought it "fun," others because friends urged them to do so, or because they wanted an occupation for their spare time and fancied that they would like the work. But whatever the first reasons for joining, once in, few could remain half-hearted, few could fail to catch something of the spirit of patriotism which animates the majority of volunteers. There is no such school for patriotism as soldiering. We are all apt to think too much about ourselves—to think *singly*. Soldiering teaches one to think *in numbers*. Just as—as soldiers—we cease to be Jones, Brown, or Robinson, becoming, instead, parts of a Battalion, so we forget our narrow little personal and parochial interests in the thought of the interest of the nation.

There are patriots in plenty outside the Volunteers, but whereas it is possible to remain unpatriotic while one is outside, it is well-nigh impossible to become a Volunteer and to remain unpatriotic for long.

IN THE DRILL HALL

"IF there is one thing more than another," said an old soldier once in my hearing, "to muck up a company" ("muck" is not the word he used, but no matter), "until there isn't a man-Jack alive of 'em who knows whether he's on his head or on his heels, whether he's in the front rank or in the rear, whether he is an odd number or an even, whether he's on parade or playing in a —— football match, it's a nervous young officer who doesn't know his work, and so gives a hesitating word of command."

I who have drilled in the ranks under that young officer, and have been that young officer myself, know only too well the truth of the old soldier's saying. In my own case there was good reason for my nervousness and diffidence both as private and as officer, as shall, in my next chapter, be told.

My Recruiting Sergeant was the Adjutant of the Battalion, a captain in the Army, and a personal friend of mine, long before I thought of joining the Territorial Forces.

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"If you'll come along to the Drill Hall on Wednesday, which is the night when officers for-gather to discuss Regimental matters," he said, "I shall have an opportunity of introducing you to most of your brother officers. The Colonel will be there and will perhaps tell you what are his wishes in regard to your place in the Battalion."

To the Drill Hall I accordingly went on the eventful Wednesday evening, feeling not a little nervous at having to meet and no doubt to be criticised by a roomful of strangers, to say nothing of taking up new and entirely unfamiliar work comparatively late in life. The cordiality of my reception soon, however, set me at my ease, and after details were settled, and the three of us—the Colonel, the Adjutant, and myself—had fallen to chatting, my Commanding Officer, that was to be, sat up in his chair, and, looking at me keenly, brought the conversation back to business with the question—

"What do you know of drill?"

"Nothing, sir," I replied, "except what every boy learns at a public school, and I'm told that even all that is changed."

The Colonel looked at me, I thought, a trifle blankly.

"You see you're not exactly a young man," he said dubiously.

"No, sir," I replied, "not in years. I rather fancy I shall be the oldest 'young officer' in the Battalion, not to say in the Regiment or in the Army; but I'm as young—younger than most of them in the matter of stamina and strength."

He leaned back in his chair to regard me thoughtfully.

"So you'll have to begin at the very beginning!" he said.

I assented.

"And when do you propose making a start?"

"Now, sir! This very minute, with your permission," I replied promptly. "Drill was just about to commence as I came through the Hall."

He looked at the Adjutant, and there was, I thought, a twinkle of amusement in his blue eyes at such energy on the part of a recruit of my mature years. The Adjutant, however, instead of smiling back, nodded at me approvingly. Until I joined the Territorial Forces I had a hazy idea that Adjutants to Volunteer Corps took their work somewhat slackly. Where I got the notion I do not know, unless it be that one would hardly expect officers in the Regular Army to be consumed with

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zeal and energy concerning Volunteering, and supposes that though they no doubt do their duty, they do it somewhat languidly and without enthusiasm. I have had reason since then to form another opinion. My Adjutant was, as I have said, my Recruiting Sergeant, and never was professional Recruiting Sergeant so eager to make sure of his man as he. I joined because I wished to do so, and because I was set on it, but had I been equally set on not joining, I doubt very much whether my Recruiting Sergeant would have let me wriggle out. And so with his work. Keeness is a mild word to apply to such energy as his, and so far from being amused, or even languidly bored, as he very well might, by such amateur enthusiasm as mine, and by the innumerable questions with which I badger him, he has kept my enthusiasm, and the enthusiasm of better men than I, at white heat by his eager and restless zeal in the interests of the Service.

"That's right," he said, springing to his feet. "When you say that you wish to begin at the very beginning, do you mean that you are ready to go out to drill right away as one of the Awkward Squad?"

"Quite ready," I answered, rising in my turn.

“Good!” said the Colonel. He rose as he spoke, and I knew that I was to understand myself as dismissed, so I followed the Adjutant out, to be introduced to the Instructor, and to take my place in the Drill Hall among the Awkward Squad.

IN THE RANKS

TO-DAY we are all "celebrities." If we are not puffed, paragraphed and portraited in the papers as poets or politicians, or authors, we achieve more world-wide fame as prize fighters, pug-dog breeders, quick-time shavers, football-players, murderers, or monster gooseberry growers. The list may be so indefinitely extended as to prove that the person who to-day is *not* a celebrity—who is not puffed and paragraphed, interviewed and portraited—is in danger of becoming a celebrity, if only because of the very remarkable and original reason that he is none.

Remembering all this, I am not given, I hope, to attaching much importance to what is said in some of the papers about myself, my home, my dog, my tie pins, or the brand of tobacco I smoke, or, in fact, to fancying that because I am the author of what the *Pall Mall Gazette* once humorously called some "harmless little books with titles which appal," that I am in any sense a person of consequence.

Had I gone into that Drill Hall with any other

idea I should very speedily have been undeceived, and I can think of no more effective treatment for any of us who may be suffering from a touch of swelled head, or from an undue sense of our own importance, than to go to strange work among strangers who have never so much as heard our name. It is such a little bit of a pool or puddle—what we call the “literary world”—and when the pebble we throw into it causes a tiny stir in the shallow water, we fancy that the ripples must spread, and make known our name abroad. As a matter of fact, there are millions who have never heard of the most famous of living authors; and those who know as much as the name of us third-rate scribblers are few. No one in the Drill Hall came up to be asked to be introduced to me as a writer of books, but the little group of onlookers near the door *did* edge closer along the wall in my direction, to gape and to grin and, when the Instructor’s back was turned, openly to jeer at the spectacle of a six foot one high man, beginning to turn grey and in immaculate evening dress—for I had come on to Headquarters from dinner—standing among young men and boys in the Awkward Squad. I admit frankly that on that first night, as well as on succeeding nights, I was the rankest duffer of the lot. Had it been a case of head work—of grasping

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a plan of campaign, or some point in tactics, I might have been the quickest to learn the work. As matters stood, I was undoubtedly the slowest. To my fellow-recruits, coming as one did from an engineer's shop, another from the carpenter's bench, and most, if not all, from more or less manual occupations, the handling of a rifle came natural. To me everything was strange. I have no knack for mechanical work, and never was what is called clever with my hands. There is, moreover, a proverb to the effect that "It is gey work teaching an old dog tricks," and I was past the age when one picks up with any readiness details like those of drill. Put a boy in the water, or on a bicycle, and the odds are that he will manage to swim a few strokes, or to ride a few yards, right away, and that, before the morning is out, he will begin to feel at home in the water or on the machine. A young man is less quick to learn, a middle-aged man is slow, and possibly may fail to learn at all. Squad Drill is simplicity itself, and the Rifle Exercises are quite easy, when one gets the hang of them, but blunders are inevitable with beginners. When my fellow-recruits blundered once, twice, or thrice, no one took much notice. They did not vary very greatly in height, were all dressed more or less alike, and so had nothing sufficiently distinctive about them to

enable the spectators to say, "There's that chap at it again!" Every time I went wrong—perhaps because of the fact that I was taller, older, and differently dressed from the others—the grin all round was universal.

What humiliated most was not so much the fact that I was making myself ridiculous (that did not greatly matter), as the fact (so at least I fancied) that my blundering was, so to speak, a slur upon my order. Had I been drilling among my social equals, among my brother officers, I should not greatly have troubled about my blunders. But I remembered having asked a brother officer who had volunteered for the Boer War, and fought in the ranks, how he felt when he first found himself under fire.

"I won't deny that I was in an abject state of funk," he said; "but I'll tell you what pulled me round and carried me through. 'So-and-so,' I said to myself, 'you are in the ranks, but you must remember that you are what most of these other men—good fellows and true as they are—are not, a gentleman. You can't play the coward and give your order away before comrades of a different class!' That did it!"

Recalling this story, I felt as if, by my blunders

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I was discrediting not only my class, but my rank as an officer. I imagined the men as saying, "He's what they call an officer and a gentleman. We've got to touch our caps to him in the street and salute him on parade. In a month or two's time he'll be teaching us our work, finding fault, and ordering us about. But look at him! Pretty fine officer he'll make."

As a matter of fact I was all wrong in fancying this, as I soon found out; but that was the way I felt that first night. And there was reason for my so thinking.

In such drilling as I had learned in my school days, "right turn" was executed by drawing back the right foot till the hollow of it was against the heel of the left, the turning being done on both heels.

To-day "right turn" is entirely different, for one raises the left heel and right toe, and turns on the right heel only.

In my school days one "stood at ease" by drawing back the right foot and sliding the right hand over the left in front. To-day "standing at ease" is effected by carrying the left foot ten inches to the left, and by grasping the right hand with the left behind the back.

Habits formed early in life are not easy to over-

come, and not once, but a score of times, on that first night, so surely as those simplest and easiest of commands, "Right Turn," "Left Turn," "Stand at Ease," were given—so surely did the methods of "standing at ease" and "turning," in which I had been instructed and drilled in my boyhood, cause me, if only from the force of long-acquired habit, to go mechanically and inevitably wrong.

The Drill Instructor, most patient and considerate of men, sighed; the recruits, good fellows, did their best to spare my feelings by staring stolidly, as if noticing nothing, in front of them; the group of onlookers gathered at the door grinned or openly jeered, and I stood stiffly at attention, prevented even—for a man at squad drill must keep his hands to his side when drilling—from wiping away the perspiration that was caused by shame and mortification and was running down into my eyes.

Nor was this the only occasion on which I made a similar exhibition of myself; for whereas the men, who joined the Battalion when I did, had only to learn the work of a private, and, as a matter of fact, are, I believe, all privates still—I was anxious to push on that I might take my place as an officer, and so was drilling, night after night, in the ranks (and sometimes, I fear, muddling and muffing it

pretty badly), that I might master the work, not only of a private, but also of a squad commander and a section commander. In addition to all this I had arranged for a course of private instruction in the duties of a Commissioned Officer who is endeavouring to make himself competent to command either a half-company or a company, and there were times, I admit, when I asked myself whether I had not taken up the work too late in life ever to do any good.

A story is told of a minister who, when learning golf, was heard to remark: "I must give it up! I must give it up!" "Give up what?" he was asked; "golfing?" "No," he replied; "the ministry." And I, in like straits to his, was minded on more than one occasion to say with him, "I must give it up," not because, as in his case, I was tempted to relieve my overwrought feelings by the use of language (even that relief is impossible to a man at drill), but because the difficulties seemed insurmountable. But never for more than a moment. With the next breath I would say: "Not at least till I have mastered it. If when I have beaten, not been beaten by the difficulties, I find the call upon my time too great, then we will think of resigning, but not till then."

And so I stuck to it, fagged at it, fought at it,

night after night, never missing a drill that I could by any possibility attend, until I had got the hang of it and passed out of the ranks for ever.

And now, if I had to go through it all again, I would do so, and gladly, for the sake of the interest I take in the work, and for the sake of the lust and the joy of overcoming difficulties that at one time seemed insurmountable.

“FOURS”

WE were watching—a woman friend of mine and myself—a line of skirmishers stealthily climbing a hill under cover of a hedge. In a hollow, some five hundred yards away on the other side of the hedge, was a small body of the enemy; and could the skirmishers reach the hill summit unseen, there was every possibility of their being able to put this particular portion of the opposing force out of action by pouring down upon it a withering volley of enfilading fire.

Naturally the skirmishers stole up the hill and alongside the hedge with the utmost caution. The most careful crawled. Some crept on hands and knees, and, in the rear, crouched a tall subaltern, his knees bent, his head and shoulders ducked down in line with the top of the hedge, his long arms being used monkeywise, to help him along and to balance his body.

“How exciting!” said my companion. “And how much more one learns by seeing a thing done for

oneself than by reading about it! I have often read about soldiers moving 'in fours,' but until to-day I did not know how it was done, or what it meant. I suppose they call it 'Fours' because one goes almost on all fours like a dog?"

Occasional attendance at Law Courts, to study character, has accustomed me to the incredible innocence which is sometimes manifested in regard to matters of common knowledge and every-day life, even by so learned a person as one of His Majesty's judges. But that such ignorance, in regard to the commonest of all forms in which soldiers move, could exist in the mind of a not unintellectual girl, who counted soldiers among her friends, and must frequently have seen both regular and auxiliary troops—to say nothing of policemen and boys' brigades—on the march, surprised me.

That, however, was before I had myself become a Volunteer. Now that I am one, I do not wonder at her ignorance of "fours," for to this day I am not sure that I know more about them than she.

"Fours," said one of the senior officers to me once, in an expansive and instructive moment, "are the natural and normal marching order of Infantry."

"Excuse me, but they are nothing of the sort, sir," I made answer (our conversation I need not say was

in the Mess Room, not on parade). "They are the natural and normal marching order of Hell. When Satan marshalled his legions to take part in the historic war in heaven, I am convinced that he moved them in those damned 'fours'—I beg your pardon, sir, what I meant to say was that he moved the cohorts of the damned in 'fours.' Anyhow, I'm morally certain that it was Satan himself who invented 'fours,' and that he did so for the confounding and undoing of Volunteer Recruit Officers."

"Fours," I freely admit, have again and again confused, and still occasionally continue to confuse me, in drill hall and on parade ground.

"No, no, sir," the long-suffering Sergeant-Major has said in a pained voice when I have given the order "Right Turn." "They're in 'fours,' sir, and when they're moving in 'fours' or 'file,' you must always 'wheel' them unless you wish to halt them. 'Fours' can't 'turn'—not in the ordinary way, that is, and unless you specially tell them beforehand that they must remain in 'fours.'"

"Why can't they 'turn'?" I would ask. "If they can't 'turn,' their education has evidently been neglected, and it is time somebody taught them to do so. Why should troops in 'fours' fancy themselves more than in other formations? Surely if

soldiers in all the imposing dignity of 'Line' are not above taking a homely 'turn,' there is no reason why every-day 'fours' should stand upon their dignity. What is there in 'fours' for them to give themselves airs about, I should like to know?"

The Sergeant-Major looked at me despairingly.

"But you *must* 'wheel' them when they are in 'fours,' sir," he explained exasperatedly. "You *can't* 'turn' them. If you did they'd form 'Two Deep,' and wouldn't be 'Fours' any longer."

"That is exactly what I'm trying to get at," I exclaimed triumphantly. "It is the best possible thing that could happen, for their sake and mine. I'd like to get all the confounded 'Fours' in the Confounded British Army, and turn them into 'Two Deep' once and for all, and so have done with them. They're 'Too Deep' for me, Sergeant-Major, I assure you."

I haven't seen that Sergeant-Major since, but I hear that he has turned quite grey, and is thinking of retiring and applying for the post of attendant at a Lunatic Asylum. The fact that he has been a Sergeant-Major since the time that Volunteer Officers were attached to the Regular Forces for instruction, being put, so I am told, in the very forefront of his qualifications for the post. I hope

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sincerely that he will get the appointment. He won't be the first person whom "Fours" have sent to an Asylum—if not to a worse place. Every time I hear the word "Fours," quite another sort of word goes down against my account in the Recording Angel's Book and Ledger of Bad Language.

When Heine was learning Latin, he said that the only reason why the Romans conquered the world was because they didn't have to learn the Latin language in their boyhood. If they had had to do so, they would be doing it now—those of them who hadn't died—he averred, and so would never have had time to conquer the world.

Those are exactly my views about that foursome game, that fearsome game of "Fours." If I had not become an officer, and so am able to order other folk into "Fours," instead of forming them myself, I should be learning to form "Fours" to this day. There are more reasons than one in favour of entering the Territorial Army as an officer instead of by way of the ranks, but one is good enough for me; and that is that, as an officer, one doesn't have to "form fours."

THE DRILL INSTRUCTOR

THERE is no one in the Service with whom I so sympathise as the Drill Instructor.

“We are called ‘Drill Instructors,’ I suppose, sir,” said one long-suffering Sergeant to me, “because there are some recruits whom nothing short of drilling a hole in their heads could get any brains, or any instruction, or any intelligence into.”

It is not, however, so much the denseness of some of the men as the deadly monotony which makes his work so depressing. Day after day he fags to lick the newly-enlisted and, possibly, not over-intelligent recruit, into shape; and then, when the Instructor’s labours are beginning to bear fruit, when the recruit is at last beginning to make progress, and some satisfaction is to be derived in drilling him, the recruit passes on into other hands for more advanced instruction, and the Instructor has to begin the heart-breaking round all over again with another batch. One hears stories of nagging and bullying by Instructors, but I have witnessed

nothing of the sort. The nearest approach to nagging which has come under my notice was nothing worse than the repetition of a foolish and senseless exclamation. A recruit marching with a squad in fours had failed to form "Two Deep" at the command "Left Turn," and the Instructor in pointing out the mistake, added emphatically, "Why, I never saw such a thing in my life!"

Half a minute after, another recruit fell into precisely the same error, and again the Instructor roared, "Why, I never saw such a thing in my life!" All through the drill, though such common mistakes as carrying a rifle at the "slope" instead of at the "trail," and turning to the left instead of to the right, were of not unfrequent occurrence—for the squad was composed of raw hands, a few of whom were particularly dull—the Instructor called high heaven to witness that never in all his life had a similar mistake come under his observation. When he had asked my permission to dismiss parade, for I happened to be the only officer present, and he and I were chatting about the progress the men were making, I ventured good-humouredly to draw his attention to the frequency with which the exclamation, "Why, I never saw such a thing in my life!" slipped out, and to comment upon the fact

that, every time he uttered it, he was in effect contradicting himself, since he had only a few minutes before witnessed a mistake of precisely the same sort.

"Well, I never, sir," he exclaimed (he was fond of meaningless catch expressions), "I hadn't noticed it; but come to think of it, I see that I do use those words very often in a morning, and of course, sir, as you say, they carry no meaning. But," he added apologetically, "I must *say something*, and come to think of it, sir, I might say worse!" And I admitted the reasonableness of the contention.

As every one knows, newly-recruited Volunteer officers can be attached for a month to the Regular Forces to receive instruction and to pass the prescribed examination for proficiency. In my own case I was wisely advised to go to Chichester, which is the *Depôt* of the Regiment, in a Volunteer Battalion of which I have the honour to hold a commission. It was explained to me that as I had everything to learn, it was not unreasonable to suppose that more interest would be taken in my progress, and possibly more patience shown with my blunders, by the Instructors of my own Regiment, than were I to go elsewhere and among strangers. One Volunteer officer, however, of whom

I heard, was more ambitious and more scornful of Depôts than I.

"No dead-and-alive old Depôt for me," he protested. "I'm going somewhere where they'll put you through your paces—perhaps to Chelsea, or else to some smart and up-to-date military centre like Hounslow or Aldershot."

Which particular "smart centre" he finally selected it is unnecessary to mention, but apparently he *did* get "put through his paces" to some purpose, being treated—when he made a mistake—no more ceremoniously than if he had been a rank-and-file recruit, except for the fact that the Sergeant-Major, after hinting that his brains were in his stomach and batter-pudding in his head, would wind up an anything but flattering opinion of the young officer's capacity with a respectful "sir."

This story—the Volunteer officer in question tells it himself—may or may not be an exaggeration, but if another anecdote which recently came to my ears be true, it shows that the sorely-tried and long-suffering Drill Instructor can, on occasion, find relief in sarcasm.

A Sergeant—so the story goes—was drilling a hopelessly thick-headed recruit, and addressed him blandly thus: "They told me before you came here

as you was a —— fool.” (The recruit looked sullen.) “But you ain’t nothin’ of the sort,” went on the Instructor. (The recruit’s face brightened.) “It’s downright wicked to call you a —— fool, for you ain’t that, no more than what I am.” (The pleased recruit smiled.) “No,” went on the Sergeant Instructor, “you ain’t no —— fool, you’re only the biggest, b——, b—— born idiot as ever pupped!”

Personally I do not believe this tale, for the patience and forbearance of the Drill Instructors under whom I drilled were beyond all praise. If, however, I may venture to find fault with the methods of some Drill Instructors (Heaven knows that some Drill Instructors have too often had reason to find fault *with me*), it is that they are prone to repeat parrot-wise the formulæ of the manual. They sling words from the instruction book, at the head of recruits, very much in the same way in which some open-air preachers hurl Bible texts at the heads of those who interrupt. Some Drill Instructors have apparently the same pathetic belief in the power of words from the manual to work miracles upon the intelligence of recruits, that open-air preachers have in the power of Bible texts to work a miracle in the soul of the unbeliever.

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Take, for instance, so simple an exercise as that of Presenting Arms. Before the Instructor stands—all more or less self-consciously, for there is a knot of grinning onlookers at the door—a squad of raw recruits. Naturally they are a mixed lot, varying as much in their intelligence as in their callings, for one is a carman, another a milk carrier, a third a clerk, a fourth an artisan, a fifth an errand boy, a sixth a warehouseman, a seventh a gardener, an eighth a commercial traveller, a ninth a tailor, and a tenth a railway hand. This motley assemblage the Instructor addresses as follows in monotonous recitative, and very much in the manner of a guide recounting the sights of some popular show place.

“At the command ‘Present Arms,’ seize the rifle with the right hand at the small, both arms close to the body. At the word ‘Two,’ raise the rifle with the right hand perpendicularly in front of the centre of the body, sling to the left; at the same time place the left hand smartly on the stock, wrist on the magazine, fingers pointing upwards, thumb close to the forefinger, point of the thumb in line with the mouth, the left elbow to be close to the butt, the right elbow and butt close to the body.

“At the word ‘Three,’ bring the rifle down per-

pendicularly close in front of the centre of the body, guard to the front, holding it lightly at the full extent of the right arm, fingers slanting downwards, and meet it smartly with the left hand immediately behind the backsight, thumb pointing towards the muzzle; at the same time place the hollow of the right foot against the left heel, both knees straight. The weight of the rifle to be supported by the left hand."

In my experience a long rigmarole of words like this—and this is only one of very many, as mechanically ground out as an oft-played tune upon a barrel organ—only confuses. In most Drill Halls, on recruit-training nights, two or more squads are generally being instructed at one and the same time, and the clamour of high-pitched voices is so bewildering that it is difficult to catch the words of the Instructor—to say nothing of the fact that the attention of recruits is constantly being distracted by machine-gun practice, by the flicking and fluttering of flag signallers, as well as by the arm-circling of semaphorers. It is true that Drill Instructors take infinite pains, show infinite patience, and that they themselves pick up a rifle and go through the different exercises over and over again. But the one thing they *won't* do is to cease pouring out a

confusing flow of words from their confounded manual. They remind one of the strictly-disciplinarian Volunteer Medical Officer of whom one reads in that interesting work, *Two Years on Trek*, by the late Lieutenant-Colonel du Moulin. The stretchers for the wounded were in requisition, and the bearers were about to go the shortest possible way to work to get them into readiness. That, however, would not do for our excessively military and disciplinarian Volunteer medico, who gave the command, "As you were," and then proceeded, "On the word 'One,' the bearers," etc. etc. "On the word 'Two' they will," and so on, with intense satisfaction to himself, if to the dissatisfaction of the men. Were I a Drill Instructor myself, it is more than possible that I should do exactly the same as every other Drill Instructor, and never cease from repeating the words of the manual. As I am not a Drill Instructor, and as it is very easy as well as pleasant to criticise other folk, I venture to suggest that they say to the squad, "Now watch me!" I would then go through the first movement of the exercise—first with my face to the recruits, and then with my back to them. This I would do several times. Then I would say, "Now let me see you do it," correcting any re-

cruits who happened to go wrong, until all were perfect. The first movement mastered, I would say, "Now for movement No. 2," again omitting the set phrases of the manual in favour of the object lesson.

As a matter of fact, the recruit learns his drill monkeywise, mechanically and by imitation—*not by being told the way in which it ought to be done*. When he begins to think about it, he becomes self-conscious and confused, and goes wrong; but once let him pick up the hang of it, by imitation, and he does it mechanically, but *he does it right*. This fact, however, the majority of Drill Instructors fail to realise, or if realised, they fail to put it into practice, and so they go on—and will go on, I suppose, to the end of time—rolling the sweet morsels of set phrases from the manual around their tongues, to the confusion of the recruit, if with infinite satisfaction to themselves.

The curse, the cant, if you like so to call it, of professionalism, lies over the Drill Hall as well as over other professions. Actors speak of becoming "stale" in their work, parsons speak of the "cancer of the altar." So surely as a man—be he parson, actor, or drill instructor—becomes a sort of human machine for the mechanical and professional grind-

ing out of words—be those words spoken for our spiritual edification, for our delight in the dramatic art, or for our instruction in the handling of a rifle—so surely shall that man's words fall in part upon deaf ears.

Let no one think that I am seeking to depreciate a hard-working, presumably underpaid, and certainly most deserving body of men. It is the system—a system for which they personally are possibly not accountable—not the men, which seems to me capable of improvement. I shall probably be told that for me, a raw recruit, fresh from the Drill Hall, to criticise a system which has been in force so long, proclaims me to be as ignorant as I am presumptuous, and that I should do well to bear in mind a certain proverb about not teaching one's grandmother to suck eggs.

All I can venture to say in my own defence is that it is precisely *because I am a raw recruit*, fresh from the Drill Hall, that I venture, only tentatively, to put forward these suggestions. And in regard to the instruction of one's grandmother in the sucking of eggs, it seems to me that a very long time has passed since our worthy grandmothers occupied themselves—if ever—in the pastime of egg-sucking; and that one or two small urchins of my ac-

quaintance, fresh from bird-nesting and egg-pilfering expeditions, could instruct their own and other folk's grandmothers to advantage in what to the venerable ladies in question is, I imagine, a lost art.

THE NON-COMS.

I BEGIN, of course, with the Sergeant-Major, and that being so I propose to open this chapter in a way which, if it be in a military sense irregular, will not, I trust, be considered a serious breach of discipline, and shall address the three Sergeant-Majors, with whom it has been my good fortune to be somewhat closely associated, thus :—

“Sergeant - Major A —— and Sergeant - Major P —— of Chichester ; Sergeant - Major B —— of Brighton ; on parade and elsewhere you are required, whenever you and I meet or pass each other, ceremoniously to salute me as an officer and a gentleman. I shall not, I hope, be held to behave unbecomingly as an officer, still less as a gentleman, if I say to you here, that I, your superior officer, do, on this occasion, ask to be allowed to stand most respectfully at the salute to you ! For you, as well as for the other Sergeant-Majors of the King's Army whom I have come to know, I entertain respect, admiration and

regard. You are tried and good soldiers, you are considerate of the men, and you are the true friends of every officer who is anxious to acquit himself creditably."

For me, a recruit, to pose as a military expert would be ridiculous, but from what I have heard from many trained and tried soldiers of long experience, and from my own infinitesimally small experience and observation, I have come to the conclusion that it would be difficult to overrate the work which is done both in peace and in war by the non-commissioned officers, and that Mr. Kipling spoke no more than the truth when he said that "the backbone of the Army is the non-commissioned man." The poem in which the line occurs is so superb that I shall take leave to quote some verses. It gives the lie direct (I do not mince my words) to those mean little "grouzers"—for there are "grouzers" in Grub Street as well as in the Army—who seek to show their superiority over the common herd by making a point of dissociating themselves from every popular verdict, and assure us that we are quite wrong in supposing that the Author of *Barrack Room Ballads* knows, or at least understands, "Tommy."

Mr. Le Gallienne once remarked that Mr. Kipling has made poetry of the refuse of language. It is

finely and truly said, for Mr. Kipling has taken the "bloodies" and the "damns" of the British Tommy and has transmuted them into poetry, and nothing short of sheer genius could do that. Here are the lines which I am venturing to quote. In my opinion no such picture of Tommy in barracks, Tommy in the drill yard and Tommy on the battlefield has ever been drawn. I had more—much more—to say of the value to the Army, and of the merits, in peace or in war, of the Non-Commissioned men; but on a subject of which a Master has written, it is best for the small scribbler to be silent, and I conclude this chapter with Mr. Kipling's magnificent tribute.

.
 "The young recruit is 'aughty—'e draf's from Gawd knows where;
 They bid 'im show 'is stockin's an' lay 'is mattress square;
 'E calls it bloomin' nonsense—'e doesn't know, no more—
 An' then up comes 'is Company an' kicks 'im round the floor!

The young recruit is 'ammered—'e takes it very 'ard;
 'E 'angs 'is 'ead an' mutters—'e sulks about the yard;
 'E talks o' 'cruel tyrants' 'e'll swing for by-an'-by,
 An' the others 'ears an' mocks 'im, an' the boy goes orf to cry.

The young recruit is silly—'e thinks o' suicide;
 'E's lost 'is gutter-devil; 'e 'asn't got 'is pride;
 But day by day they kicks 'im, which 'elps 'im on a bit,
 Till 'e finds 'isself one mornin' with a full an' proper kit.

.

The young recruit is 'appy—'e throws a chest to suit ;
 You see 'im grow moustaches ; you 'ear 'im slap 'is boot ;
 'E learns to drop the 'bloodies' from every word 'e slings,
 An' 'e shows an 'ealthy brisket when 'e strips for bars an' rings.

The cruel tyrant-sergeants they watch 'im 'arf a year ;
 They watch 'im with 'is comrades, they watch 'im with 'is beer ;
 They watch 'im with the women at the regimental dance,
 And the cruel tyrant-sergeants send 'is name along for 'Lance.'

.
 An', last, a Colour-Sergeant, as such to be obeyed,
 'E schools 'is men at cricket, 'e tells 'em on parade ;
 They sees 'em quick an' 'andy, uncommon set an' smart,
 An' so 'e talks to oficers which 'ave the Core at 'eart.

.
 An' when it comes to marchin' he'll see their socks are right,
 An' when it comes to action 'e shows 'em 'ow to sight ;
 'E knows their ways of thinkin' and just what's in their mind ;
 'E knows when they are takin' on an' when they've fell be'ind.

'E knows each talkin' corpril that leads a squad astray ;
 'E feels 'is innards 'eavin', 'is bowels givin' way ;
 'E sees the blue-white faces all tryin' 'ard to grin,
 An' 'e stands an' waits an' suffers till it's time to cap 'em in.

An' now the hugly bullets come peckin' through the dust,
 An' no one wants to face 'em, but every beggar must ;
 So, like a man in irons, which isn't glad to go,
 They moves 'em off by companies, uncommon stiff an' slow.

Of all 'is five years' schoolin' they don't remember much,
 Excep' the not retreatin', the step, an' keepin' touch.
 It looks like teachin' wasted when they duck an' spread an' 'op,
 But if 'e 'adn't learned 'em they'd be all about the shop !

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An' now it's "'Oo goes backward?' an' now it's "'Oo comes on?'
An' now its 'Get the doolies' an' now the captain's gone;
An' now it's bloody murder, but all the while they 'ear
'Is voice, the same as barrick drill, a-shepherdin' the rear.

'E's just as sick as they are, 'is 'eart is like to split,
But 'e works 'em, works 'em, works 'em till he feels 'em take
the bit;
The rest is 'oldin' steady till the watchful bugles play,
An' 'e lifts 'em, lifts 'em, lifts 'em through the charge that wins
the day!"

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[*The writer wishes very gratefully to acknowledge Mr. Kipling's kindness in permitting so lengthy an extract to be made from the poem "The 'Eathen." Thanks are also due to Messrs. Methuen & Co., the publishers of "The Seven Seas," and to Messrs. A. P. Watt & Son, Mr. Kipling's agents.*]

DISCIPLINE

TO the rank and file discipline comes very near to what among officers we should call breeding. Discipline might, in fact, be defined as the Army equivalent to good manners. It has to be knocked into some people; to gentlemen it comes natural. That is why one so rarely hears of insubordination among officers. For an officer to commit a breach of discipline would be equivalent to committing an offence against good breeding. That, too, is why Drill Sergeants tell you that officers are so easy to instruct. It is a question of discipline, of superior breeding, quite as much as superior education or of superior brains.

If a young fellow of my acquaintance who, knowing nothing of Soldiering or even of Drill, had just taken a Commission in my own battalion and came to me for advice, I think I should put the position to him somewhat in this way:—

“You have a lot to learn, but there is one point in the making of a good soldier in which even now, and

new as you are to the work, you have it in your power not only to set an example to others, but to shine. Even if socially you happen to be, we will say, in a superior position to any of us ; even if there are subjects on which possibly you could instruct our commanding officer himself to his advantage, you must remember that as a soldier you are a raw recruit, and that your first business must be to learn to obey. And if you take my advice, you'll do the thing thoroughly. It is true that you come in as an officer, but while you are in the ranks, learning the work of a private, you are in a sense under the command of the Sergeant-Instructor, and you have to show the rank-and-file recruits that an officer, until in due time he comes to command, knows better than any one else how to obey. The men will treat you with increased, rather than with less, respect because you and they stood side by side together to learn the first lesson of the soldier. It will be entirely your own fault if they do not. In your relations with your brother officers—all of whom will necessarily be your seniors—your first duty must be unhesitatingly to obey. I do not, of course, mean that I counsel blind following of orders, slavish obedience to commands. Even a beginner who happens, for instance, to know a certain stretch of

country may be able to make a useful suggestion to a superior officer who does not, and in such a case—were I that beginner—I should not hesitate respectfully to put forward my views. It would be discipline, not a breach of discipline, to do so; for the whole trend of things in the Army to-day, and rightly, is to encourage subordinates to observe, to use their intelligence, and to accustom themselves to act upon their own initiative. Otherwise, in some unforeseen emergency, when prompt action had to be taken, and when it would be impossible to apply to a superior for instruction, the subordinate would metaphorically be all at sea.

“But with discipline *as* discipline, there must be no half-heartedness. Loyalty to one’s superior officer is imperative upon every soldier. Even in the Mess Room, though there, of course, the formality of parade is dropped, you would do well to remember that you are junior subaltern. If, for instance, there is a knock and no servant happen to be present, you should go to the Mess Room door, and if an officer be wanted by his orderly, or by any one else, you should carry the message to him. Punctiliousness in such matters and upon such points as following, not preceding, your seniors into the Mess Room, and in taking your place at the foot of the table, may

seem to you trivial, but they all tend to the maintenance of what I have called the Army equivalent to Fine Manners; the Good Breeding, not merely of the Mess Room, but of the battlefield—Discipline.”

We build our barracks with guard house, gymnasium hall, and mess room; we lay out the open spaces into drill yard or review ground; we attend camp, or appoint annual courses of training, with one thought and one place only in our mind—the battlefield. All the rest—drill and parade and review; the gay uniform, the glitter of accoutrements, the saluting and the ceremonies; the trooping and carrying of colours, the march past and the clash of music—are in themselves worth nothing, except in so far as they serve to the end, by right of which, and by right of which only, they are of any worth or of any meaning—to train and to teach the soldier to fight.

In the drill hall, or the parade ground, it had seemed a waste of energy and time, day by day, over and over again, to be put through this routine of drudgery and detail, until monotonously, almost meaninglessly, we obeyed the command to close or to extend, to fire by sections, to advance in lines of skirmishers, or to retire man by man. But shift the scene from drill hall and parade ground to battle-

field, and this mechanical obedience to orders, which comes only of perfect discipline, counts for more than even courage; for it can reassemble scattered and demoralised troops, retrieve disaster, and compel victory out of what seemed like assured defeat.

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There are murderous gaps all along the line. The broken ranks—disorganised almost to a rabble—are reeling and staggering under a bloody hail of fire. If left to themselves, with none to control and to command, the men might stampede like a flock of frightened sheep. Were they untrained and undisciplined, they *would* stampede like frightened sheep; but suddenly, just as in the drill yard or on parade ground, rings out the familiar word of command. Perhaps for an instant there is hesitation, but they have never disobeyed in the past, and discipline will not let them disobey now. Automatically, mechanically, they obey—steadied and rallied already by finding their ranks reformed, comrade standing again with comrade, and the responsibility taken out of their hands.

As in the drill yard and on the parade ground sound the accustomed rattle of rifle, the accustomed shuffle of feet. The very familiarity of it all gives them confidence. Again the word of command,

helping them, holding them together, if only by its very masterfulness; and off they go—perhaps to be warily and wisely withdrawn to safety-affording cover, perhaps to be led and urged to the final charge which, coming at the crisis of the engagement, and when their advance is supported by a covering fire, may carry the enemy's position, turning disaster into victory, and setting all England ringing with their fame.

But whatever the result—whether they return home in triumph, to be hailed as heroes, fêted and entertained and decorated; or whether theirs be the greater honour and glory of a soldier's grave, it was discipline which came to their assistance in the crucial moment; it was discipline which won for them the glory and the fame.

It may be dull work, this sowing the seeds of discipline in the drudgery of the drill yard or parade ground; but when discipline, that flower which breaks into perfect bloom only on a hard-fought battlefield or on the deck of a sinking ship, is seen in all its grandeur—the sight is one at which men and women must worship, and the very gods themselves must wonder.

Discipline, I repeat, is the first article of faith in a soldier's creed.

“Article of faith,” did I say? It is more than that. Discipline is, in fact, a soldier's very religion.

CAMP : UNDER CANVAS

WERE I asked to sum up in a sentence my impression of my first Camp, I should say, emphatically, "The jolliest week in my life!"

How to set about describing it all I do not know, for I kept no diary, and even had I done so, a mere diary recountal of what a particular battalion did on a particular day would be of small interest to any one except members of the battalion in question. Our camp was at Dover which, in the event of invasion, it will, I hear, be our duty—in conjunction with the Buffs—to defend; and that Dover as a town should be interested in the arrival of her chosen defenders, was, we felt, only to be expected.

Nor were we disappointed.

"Come on, Bill! Here's some soldiers!" were the first words which greeted us. They were shouted excitedly by one small boy to another as our train drew up at the platform.

"Soldiers!" retorted the other. "Garn! Who're

yer getting at? They ain't soldiers. They're only 'woluteers!"

The contempt with which the last word was spoken reminded me of what was once said by the four-year-old son of a distinguished Colonel of Dragoons, on being carried to a window to see an Infantry Regiment marching by. As his father was in the Cavalry, the child had a very proper scorn for all other arms of the Service, and on finding that he had been disturbed merely to see a Foot Regiment pass, he exclaimed disgustedly, "Mud-twampers!"

But if the enthusiasm with which we were greeted by the younger members of one sex was wanting in warmth, we had no cause to complain of the welcome extended to us by the other. Every servant girl in Dover turned out—I had almost written "to a man"—to wave to us from a doorstep or to smile coquetishly at us from a window as we passed by on our way to our Camping-ground at Fort Burgoyne, just behind the Castle. Dover herself reminded me, by her greeting, of the widow of an officer in the Regular Army who, while still wearing weeds (in this case the weeds were a thick Channel fog) for the departed officer in the Regular Army, is not entirely unwilling to be persuaded to doff crape, and to solace herself by accepting another mate in the

shape of a Volunteer. In any case she was wearing the decorous, if not altogether becoming, weeds of a Channel fog when we arrived, but we had not been her guest for more than a day before she threw aside her mourning, and decked herself in sunshine and gay colours.

For that first day and night, however, the fog lasted, and I can assure the reader that the disposal in camp of a large body of men (we mustered no less than eighty per cent of the entire battalion), after dark in a fog and in strange surroundings, is not easy of accomplishment. Everything had, however, been well planned out beforehand. In an incredibly short space of time we were all comfortably under canvas, and after "Lights Out" had sounded, absolute quietness reigned.

But not for long. The sea mist thickened and, the whole night through, guns boomed, sirens screeched and hooted, and this, added to the novelty of the situation, disturbed our rest sadly.

To me the experience of sleeping under canvas was not entirely new, for I had camped up-river with my old friend Mr. Jerome K. Jerome so far back as the time when he was writing his *Three Men in a Boat*.

But camping-out in some still and silent spot beside a reach of the river is a very different matter

from camping-out on the heights of Dover, when—as happened one night—a hurricane was blowing. Being very tired, for we had done a thirty-mile march during the day, I dropped off to sleep before the wind got up. Before I awoke I dreamed that I had been court-martialled for some military offence (Volunteers are under military law while in camp), my sentence being that I be transformed—as in the fairy stories—into the Royal Standard, and be run up on the flag-post of Windsor Castle on the stormiest night of the year. The sentence was, so I dreamed, being carried out; but even in my sleep the fact that the Royal Standard would *not* be kept flying after sunset penetrated my intelligence, for the dream changed suddenly, as dreams have a way of doing, and my second dream-fancy was that I was the Colonel's shirt (there had been some talk of doing our next day's work in flannel shirt and kharki knee breeches, minus tunics), and after being washed, I had been hung out to dry—still wringing wet—on a clothes-line. Then I awoke to find that the flap of my tent had blown open, and that the wind and the rain were running a neck-and-neck race to see which could first effect its purpose—the purpose of the latter being to drown me where I lay; that of the former to blow me out of bed.

Wind! That the ropes stood the strain at all was a wonder, for the tent seemed suddenly to become a live thing, which tore at its fastenings as a blind-mad bull might tear and strain at his tether to get free. Tent, bed-clothes, the very hair on my head seemed rippling and streaming, till I feared that we should be blown away and out to sea.

Rain! Had we been on Mount Ararat instead of on Dover heights, every man, beast, bird, or insect would straightway have swarmed into the Ark, under the impression that the threatened Deluge had come.

Leaping out of bed I thrust my head through the opened tent-flap and yelled frantically for my manservant who was sleeping, or at all events sojourning, in an adjoining tent. I might as well have called for the butler at my club at Brighton. No human being could hear, no human being could make himself heard in such a storm; so cursing manservant, wind, rain, camp, and Dover, I was blown back into bed, where I curled up and held on, so to speak, by my teeth till the gale abated; only to laugh at it all next morning when I heard that other men had fared even worse than I.

CAMP: CHURCH PARADE

OUR first morning in camp being Sunday, we attended Church Parade at seven o'clock, and with a punctuality which would have put a civilian congregation to shame.

The battalion was drawn up in three sides of a square, and rarely have I attended a service—"As you were!" and *never* have I attended a service (it sounds better, I think, put that way) which was more reverently followed by every member of the congregation. Even those of us who are most regular in attending Church Parade on Sunday—I am afraid the entries would not be numerous, should any one start a church parade attendance competition—but even those of us who are most regular in our attendance, must have been struck by the strangeness of hearing the familiar words in unfamiliar surroundings. The fact which gave me such a sense of unreality was that there was no collection. My Colour-Sergeant—a good Churchman and a pious young man to boot—looked lost and dazed. "Church

—and no collection !” he muttered weakly like a man in a dream, and holding his hand to his head as if trying to remember where he was. “ It don’t seem natural, sir, does it ? ”

Nor did it ; for without wishing to pose as an expert upon church attendance, I can confidently say that to me, at least, the experience was entirely new.

Crossing from Norway to England one Sunday, I remember that Morning Prayers were read on board, and very strange it seemed to attend a service where the lectern was a card-table draped by a Union Jack, where the congregation knelt upon a ship’s deck, and where there was no organ except a ship’s piano, and no anthem other than that chanted by the wind and waves.

But when collection time came round, as come round it inevitably does in every church, chapel, or sanctuary of any sort that ever I was in, the well-known tinkle of threepenny-bits being dropped endways into a plate so as to make them sound like sixpences or shillings (an art only to be acquired by long practice), dispelled all sense of unreality, and we knew at once that we were spending Sunday morning, as Sunday morning should be spent, in Church.

If, however, we were left the richer in pocket by being spared the collection at Church Parade in

camp, we should have been left the poorer in spirit had we missed our Chaplain's admirable sermon. In earnest, ringing tones he dwelt upon manliness as inseparable from Christianity, and in plain but pointed words he put before us our duty to God, to our King, to our fellows, and to our country. Then he went on to bid us, to order us, in fact—as our spiritual superior officer—to do that duty well and faithfully.

Listening to his eloquent exhortation, I was strongly reminded of what the late Rev. Hugh Price Hughes—the only Nonconformist Minister of any note, so far as I am aware, who had the courage openly to support the Conservative Government in the matter of the Boer War—once said to a friend of mine: “Don't plead with sinners to come to God,” he exclaimed. “Command them!”

It was well said. If there were more commanding and less cheap-jacking of religion in the matter of seeking to bring men and women to God, the churches would be better filled and by more truly religious congregations. Nor is this the only point in which the Churches might adopt Army methods to advantage, for, so long as both Church and Army are State Institutions, I fail to see why discipline should be allowed to go to pieces in one, while rigidly maintained in the other.

CAMP : MESS

THE crimson-draped, flag-hung tent, the table with its shaded lights of rose silk, the silver and the flowers, made a brave show to the eye as I entered the room on my first Mess Night in Camp. Looking up the table from my subaltern's place at the foot when we were seated, the scene was brilliant. Our mess uniform is scarlet with the blue facings of "Royal" regiments, and as our Regimental badge—a Maltese cross with the Garter motto and cross in the centre, the whole surmounted by the Roussillon plume—is admittedly one of the handsomest in the Service—the effect was very striking. There were nearly a score of us at table, and with our scarlet coats and white fronts we looked as gay as a bed of red and white geraniums.

Every Regiment has its own traditions and customs, which vary sometimes in the different battalions, and these customs and traditions, I need hardly say, are religiously observed. In one battalion of the Regiment, for instance, they drink

the King's health (my loyalty protests in spite of ancient custom) seated, the reason being that when the then ruling Sovereign did them the honour of being their guest, he was so gracious as to say, "Keep your seats, gentlemen," when his health was drunk. In another battalion, when the Mess President says, "Mr. Vice, 'The King,'" the Vice-President, instead of giving the toast thus: "Gentlemen, 'The King'"—as is customary—merely repeats after him the words, "The King," and should Mr. Vice inadvertently slip in the customary, but, in the case of this particular battalion, omitted, word, a fine of a certain number of bottles of champagne is imposed.

These rules vary, as I say, according to one's Regiment or to one's battalion, and I was relieved that night to know that my first Mess was decorously over with no inadvertent transgression on my part of etiquette or rule.

The most ceremonious point in a Camp Mess is reached when the Vice-President passes the word to the band, which meanwhile has been discoursing music outside, that the officers and their guests are about to drink the health of the King.

The band then strikes up our impressive National Anthem, and all present spring erectly to "atten-

tion," and remain thus until the last note has died away.

After the King's health has been drunk coffee and cigars arrive, and with them a new sense of sociability and relaxation. The ball of conversation is tossed from one to another faster and more merrily, until the time comes to adjourn to the adjacent Smoking Room, and all settle down to the after-dinner jollity which is so great a feature of camp. For to go into camp is to renew one's youth. No one is old there. Good-fellowship, high spirits, and, most of all, eternal youthfulness everywhere prevail. Methuselah himself, were he alive to-day and could he be induced to join the Territorial Army, would—once in camp—dash his wig, if he wore one, upon the floor, and literally, not metaphorically dance a can-can of wild joy upon it. Most of us were young, some of us were middle-aged, and a few of us were grey; but for that week at least, after mess and work were over, there wasn't a man among us, from the Colonel downwards, who was a day more than twenty-one. I take it that the reason is that for that one week at least, and to make things go with a swing, we had all to be of one age. For some of us to be enjoying ourselves after the manner of middle-aged people, while others were behaving like boys,

would not make for good fellowship ; and since old heads cannot be put on young shoulders, the only way to meet the case is for the old to put back the clock and elect once again to be young. As soldiers we had to obey orders, and youthfulness being the order of the day, or rather, of the night as well as of the early hours of the morning—for youthfulness we went the whole hog, the oldest of us playing the game with the youngest and the best.

I will not describe the scenes in Mess Room or Camp Tent when health and high spirits are making holiday after a day's hard work. Those who have shared and enjoyed the fun in Mess Room and Camp Tent at such times will smile sympathetically and understand. Those who have not shared and enjoyed it, cannot be expected to sympathise, and possibly would not understand were it all described, so why should I tell tales out of school? That every night's frolic was greater than the frolic of the night before, and that the wind-up night was the best of the week, we all agreed—not excepting those who were black and blue from the bruises of cock-fighting and wrestling matches, or from the rough handling of a mock court-martial—not even excepting those whose tents had been barbarously and shamelessly ragged. If asked by a censorious world where was the sense of

grown men and, for the matter of that, grey-headed men, behaving like boys, I reply—

“Because the younger of us believed the proverb that you can only be young once, and because the elder of us, even the eldest of us, knew the proverb for a lie, and for the concoction of some sour-faced killjoy who wished to make men and women old before their time. One *can* be just as young as one chooses. And for that week we all chose, once our work was done, not to be a day older than twenty-one.”

CAMP : SHAM-FIGHTS

BY going into camp the Volunteer fancies that he can faintly realise something of what going to the front means to the Regular soldier. It would scarcely be an exaggeration to say that, to the Volunteer, his drill-hall work, when compared to camp, is like times of peace when compared to times of War. Cynics will perhaps smile at the comparison of what they would call a "picnic" to a campaign—of our bloodless sham-fights to the shambles of a battlefield ; but as I have said elsewhere, the Volunteer knows that what to-day is "sham" may to-morrow be sober earnest—that the rôle he sustains, in what I may call the safety of a private rehearsal, he may before long have to play in public under fire ; and this knowledge it is which makes the game—sham though it may be at this stage of things—so real to him and so well worth the playing. In the farthest back of my Non-Volunteering days I never could understand the sneer with which many people and many newspapers spoke of the sham-fights of the Volunteers. Later on I shall have something to

say about the Sportsman as a Volunteer, but at the risk of repeating myself I venture to say here that viewed from no higher standpoint than as a game; a game in which the pawns and pieces are living men; a game which we play that we may practise ourselves for the time when we may have to play it in dead earnest, for a noble and patriotic end, and when we shall be called upon to "pool" our own lives as the stakes, Volunteering is an immeasurably worthier and manlier game than any of those at which Non-Volunteers play. Take, for example, our night operations in camp.

A Company was told off to act as the enemy, who were supposed to have effected a landing at St. Margaret's Bay and were trying to get through our lines into Dover. The stretch of country to be defended extended from Langdon Bay on the right to Firth's Farm on the left; and as each Company Commander was assigned the portion of the line of defence for which he was responsible, he marched off his men, made a thorough examination of the ground, noting every point where it was possible for an invader to get through, put out his outposts, made the necessary arrangements about picquets and patrols, and then took up his position where the best possible view of the country he had to defend could be obtained

with the least possible exposure of his men and himself to either the observation or the fire of the enemy.

I was in command of "F" Company; and the tenseness and the excitement of that night watch I shall not soon forget.

It was, I am persuaded, the excitement that carried us through without our taking harm, for, August though the month was, the night was bitterly cold on the exposed heights of Dover. To prevent ourselves from being seen, we had to lie prone upon the ground all the night, and so saturated was the grass with dew that even our thick military great-coats could not keep out the damp from striking through and chilling us. We took up our position about nine, and as "Cease Firing" was not sounded till three-thirty, when that shy maiden, Morning—dismayed to find her robing-room of the downs thus given over to strangers—stole slowly and shamefacedly towards us over the sea, we saw the whole pageant of the night-sky from dusk to dawn. In the dead hours of the darkness, the sky, when we looked up at it, seemed like one great battlefield, on which Old Night—like Napoleon after Moscow—was sullenly retiring his massed but now broken and scattered star-battalions towards the west.

But of the skies—save for an occasional upward

glance to ease the strain of long watching—those of us who were keenest took small notice. A few of my men found it difficult to keep awake, for we had had some heavy trench-digging the day before, and these men I allowed to snatch a nap while others watched. But the majority had their heart so entirely in the work that they scouted almost resentfully, if respectfully, the very proposition. "Sleep, sir!" whispered my Sergeant (for our orders were neither to talk nor to smoke, and they were rigidly obeyed). "Sleep!" he repeated, almost with pain. "Me! Why I wouldn't miss a moment of it, and I wouldn't have one of the enemy slip by the lines we're watching not for worlds."

And so we watched, watched, watched, until our eyes began to play tricks under the strain, and haystacks in the darkness seemed to be moving forward like stealthily advancing squads of men, and bushes became human shapes that we could have sworn were creeping in upon us on hands and knees.

Suddenly there came a whisper in my ear. "Hist! what's that, sir, on the left under the hedge, this side of those two trees?"

This time it was no trick played upon us by a tired eye, no bush or tree-trunk twisted into a human likeness by our own fancy, no phantom enemy pro-

jected out of our own imagination by the strain of long watching. This time it *was* the enemy, as represented by some of his scouts on the look-out to ascertain our positions, to worm their way through our lines, or haply to discover a weak and imperfectly patrolled link in the chain of defence we had drawn.

Then we would settle down to our man-hunting in dead earnest, watching their movements, scarcely daring meanwhile to breathe, lest even a breath should betray us, to see whether it were best to lie still and let them come on—to walk into our midst as into a trap—or to detail a small body of men to steal round upon their flank, and so by cutting off their retreat, to kill, to capture, or otherwise to put them out of action. Except just to say that we kept our lines unbroken and that no single scout got through that night, I need not further narrate what happened. I am writing of these operations not as a descriptive reporter, but merely to convey to an outsider some idea of the fascinations of man-hunting at midnight, and to assure those who sneer at our work because it is “sham” that we are ready and willing to play the game in earnest when the time comes, and are foolish enough to think that in war-time we shall play it all the better because we practise it thus in times of peace.

THE DAY AFTER CAMP

I HAD been spending an hour one afternoon while we were in camp with the Sergeant Instructor who had been giving me some private lessons in the seclusion of my own tent, and I left him to make my way to the Mess Room where, as it was Visitors' Day, the officers were entertaining some of their friends, among whom was the Colonel's wife. Our hospitable Commanding Officer seeing me enter, made a place for me at his own table. A question about some new attack formation which we had been practising during the morning, being put by one of the visitors, the Colonel explained it at length, and then, knowing my thirst for military information, turned to me and said kindly, "Do you follow how it's done, Kernahan?" and I, with the coaching I had just been receiving from the Instructor in my own tent, replied dutifully, "I see, Sergeant!"

Three days after that we were returning by rail from Dover to Brighton, and I was detailed to act as

Orderly Officer. "What have I got to do?" I inquired of the Adjutant. "You see, I have never been Orderly Officer on a journey, and I haven't a ghost of an idea what the duties are."

He explained that among other duties I was answerable for the safe transit of the men—that I must alight promptly at every stoppage, to see that the rank and file were not allowed to leave their carriage without good reason. "In fact," he said, "it is your duty to see that every one in the battalion is back in the train before we start. You must be the first out when we stop, and the last to get in again when we start."

In acting for the first time as an Orderly Officer I interpreted the Adjutant's commands a trifle too literally.

At one of our stops the Colonel got out to stretch his legs, and remembering that I was to see everybody in before re-entering the train, that I was to be the first out and the last in, I waited dutifully for him to take his seat.

The whistle sounded and the train began to move. "Come along; you'll be left behind," he called, jumping in. When I had followed he said, "That was a near squeak! What on earth were you waiting for?"

"I was told, sir," I replied, "that as Orderly Officer I was to see every one in before we started, and I was waiting for you."

"Did you ever see such a man?" he said, turning to the others with a hearty laugh. "Called me 'Sergeant' before my own wife only three days ago, and now he has started ordering me about, and won't let me get in or out of a train without asking his permission!"

And I laughed as heartily as the rest.

It was, however, my last laugh for the week. We had got up at the ungodly hour of 4.30 a.m. to catch a train which brought us to Brighton with all the day in front of us, and never before had day dragged so heavily as that.

I changed into mufti and sauntered down King's Road to my Club—the best club in England, outside London. Separated as it is from the road by a gravelled carriage-way, it is a Club, for the restful atmosphere of which—the cosy armchairs, the abundant newspapers, magazines, and reviews, the admirable cuisine, the noiseless gliding of attentive waiters, the buzz and banter of well-bred gossip, and the sense of sanctuary and aloofness from the bustling and vulgar world outside—I always long when I am away from Brighton.

On this particular morning, however, I was disposed to take an unfavourable view of everything—the Club not excepted. “I have too many Clubs,” I said sourly, on finding that my favourite chair near the window was occupied. “I’ll resign some of them, I think, and practise economy. I ‘went it’ a bit at camp, and there’ll be a tidy bill to pay when the accounts come in. Confound accounts! Confound everything! Confound everybody!”

Gloomily I looked around. Not only were none of my particular cronies in the Club-house, but, excepting for the man who was sitting in my chair, and had taken it, I was persuaded, purposely to annoy me, the place was practically empty, which was not to be wondered at, remembering that this was the second week after the August Bank Holiday, that Brighton was given up almost entirely to the tripper and the cockney, and that half residential Brighton was on the moors or had gone abroad.

I flung out of the Club sulkily, wondering how on earth I was to get through the day. Running up to London did not commend itself, for London would be as empty of my friends as Brighton. I bought a cigar, took two pulls at it, and then—“Bah! the beastly thing! absolutely unsmokable!” I growled—threw it away. Where should I lunch? What

should I do with myself? The place seemed positively to reek of the tripper and the cockney. "How sweetly and saltly the sea wind will be blowing on the breezy heights of Dover now!" I said to myself. "How glad I should be to be sitting down, hungry as a 'left' cat, to luncheon in the flag-decked Mess Tent, with the Colonel (what a leader of men and born good fellow he is!) at the head of the table, to nod cheerily at us subalterns at the foot, or to call down some kindly encouraging word, or equally kindly and encouraging chaff, about our morning's work. He notices everything, sees everything, does the Colonel; but though he'd stand no nonsense, he never fusses, never worries his officers, and has a blind eye for the mistakes of a beginner—so long as he knows the beginner is doing his poor little best. Heigh-ho! How good it would be to hear what Major K—— speaks of as the Colonel's 'double bass' voice, calling to us now, whether on parade or at lunch in the Mess Room! (He's a keen soldier, and good sort, is K——. Helped me a lot when I was in difficulties over my drill, bless him!) How good it would even be to be snatching a hasty pipe—hungry and lunchless—somewhere on the downs while the Second in command (dear old H——! there's another

fine soldier and right good fellow! they're all good fellows in the Battalion) marking our position on the map and explaining his plan for driving the enemy out of the trenches! Here, in Brighton to-day, I haven't a ha'p'orth of appetite. It's sheer waste of time as well as of money to think of lunch. I'm hipped, and that's a fact, and I don't see how——"

"Why my dear C——! Is that you, old chap? Good luck to your brown face! I'm more glad to set eyes on you than I can say. It brings old Dover back again. I was just thinking of Dover and the other fellows, and was feeling as blue as frost-bite. Come along to lunch, and we'll crack a bottle and drink to the good time we had there, and to the good fellows we forgathered with there, and fight our battles all over again. Come along."

That is the way one feels on the first day back from camp. That is the way one feels in coming back to civilian life after a week's unbroken good-fellowship and soldiering. On such a morning, when one is like to expire from sheer *ennui* and boredom, the face of a comrade with whom one has forgathered in camp, and with whom one can forgather to compare experiences now, is the most

welcome sight in the world. In his company one can forget for the moment that one is a civilian, and can relive, and recall, that week of weeks which I count as the very crown and flowering of a Volunteer's year.

ON THE RANGE

I DO not know that I have anything of interest to say about the Range; for though I have been on duty at the Butts and at the Firing Point, one's attention is necessarily so concentrated upon the work that there is very little time to think of anything else.

On the question of Marksmanship, however, I *do* claim to speak with some authority, inasmuch as the first time I fired a rifle I won the princely sum of Fourpence—and then only with a “sighting shot”—in some sort of competition for a Company Prize. Whom or what it was I hit, and whether anybody was hurt, I do not know, but it is a fact that the fourpence was duly forwarded to me by post, together with a statement to the effect that the amount in question was the prize-money won by me at the butts.

Here, I felt, was an occasion for the display of magnanimity on my part. This was an opportunity not to be lost. So I wrote (after consulting a book

of "Familiar Quotations"), quoting two poems—Aaron Hill's *Snake in the Grass*, "But me no buts," and Tennyson's *Lancelot and Elaine*, "Prize me no prize," returning the fourpence (it was sent in stamps, not in bullion) and protesting that I did not think it "the thing" for officers to augment their income by accepting money prizes, intended for the benefit of the men, and suggesting that the capital be invested and the interest applied to some such purpose as founding a Yearly Prize for the Encouragement of Good Marksmanship in the Company.

What became of the fourpence I do not know. When I was at school, an elderly gentleman once presented seven of us with a sixpence between us to buy sweets, expressing the hope that we should not "make beasts" of ourselves, and on that occasion, as on this, scenes of debauchery were not likely to ensue.

The builder of the range between Portslade and Southwick must have formed a low estimate of the average height of Volunteers. When I was in command of a Butt party there, I found that, on standing erect, my head was only some three inches below the top of the entrenchment behind which the Butt party was sheltered, and that I could touch the "outer" circle of the target with my hand. Even allowing for

the fact that I am the tallest officer in the battalion, this did not leave much "salvage" or margin, and though I never had a moment's nervousness, it was a curious sensation to hear the sharp "flut!" of the bullet as it struck and passed through the paste-board surface of the target, so immediately overhead.

One is as safe—safer perhaps in the butts than in any other part of the range, but I did once incur what I suppose was some risk. A bullet in striking against a stone or a piece of iron, in the trench behind the butts, either glanced off or rebounded in such a way that it fell almost at my feet, to flatten itself on the butt wall just behind me.

One Range story which was recently told me I am bound to say I do not believe. The red danger flag on the signal-staff adjoining the butts had been hoisted, and the men were about to commence practice, when the Officer in charge at the firing point saw an eccentric-looking person, who was reading a book as he walked, calmly strolling towards them from the other side of the range, and at an angle which would bring him directly across the line of fire. The officer instantly gave orders for the "Cease Fire" flag to be hoisted at the firing point, and stepping a few yards out, he shouted to the stranger to go back. The intruder,

either because he was deep in his book, or perhaps because the wind, which was blowing strongly in the direction whence he was coming, carried the sound away from him, instead of towards him, took not the slightest notice, but continued his advance towards the centre of the range.

"You have a powerful voice, Corporal Jones," said the officer, turning to a big, burly Volunteer, who was by trade a costermonger, and so was accustomed to making himself heard in all weathers. "Just go a little way out towards the back—not in front of the firing point, mind—and shout to that person to get off the range."

Away went the costermonger (he was in mufti by the by) and hailed the stranger lustily. "Hi! you there! Get back, will you! Wot the —— do you mean by walking about 'ere, as if the —— place belonged to yer!"

"How dare you address me like that, fellow?" spluttered the little gentleman, peering at the costermonger short-sightedly through the gold glasses he was wearing. "I've a better right here than you, for I'm the father-in-law of the Earl of ——, to whom the whole of this property belongs, and I'm staying at ——"

"Can't 'elp that, guv'nor," interrupted the coster-

monger gruffly. "If you was the bloomin' Herl hisself, an' got walkin' acrost the range when our chaps is firin'—a bullet 'ud be just as like to kill you or 'im, as any other —— fool!"

This story, which was told me as fact, I do not, as I say, believe, for I seem to have heard something like it in a different setting.

Here, however, is another Range story, the accuracy of which is vouched for by Mr. Warwick Deeping of the First Cinque Ports, the author of *Uther and Igraine*, and other successful novels.

Private G. was a little, pale-faced youth with queer pig's eyes, a lurid vocabulary, and a great amount of assurance. He was the worst shot in the Company, never having succeeded in making himself efficient.

The Sergeant Instructor had his eye upon him. Private G. turned up at the range one day to do his class firing, remarking that he was going to get "a —— bull with every other shot, but that the —— wind was a bit choppy."

He started at 200, scoring two outers and a bull (a fluke), the other shots being misses.

The Sergeant Instructor looked grim.

At 300 Private G. did badly—misses and one outer, high up at "one o'clock," but he swore hard at his rifle and showed no shame. The Sergeant had

been sitting beside him with a suspicious look in the corner of his eye.

At 400 there were frantic wavings of the marker's flag. The bullets were slapping into the hillside. The look of suspicion in the Sergeant's eye had deepened, but he led Private G. to the next range. Private G. was wriggling himself into a comfortable position on the ground when the Sergeant jumped up with a shout.

"Don't fire! There's a cow walking up to the target."

There was no cow, of course, but Private G. put up his rifle cheerfully, and wondered "where the —— cow (all cows were to him of one colour) had come from." The Sergeant watched the imaginary cow with one eye. The other was on Private G.

"Hang me if there isn't another cow coming," he said.

"So there is," said the Private, feeling to see if his pipe was safe in his pocket.

"And if I'm not mistaken," exclaimed the angry Sergeant, "there's another one coming round the corner. At least it looks like it. Here, get up you there—unload first—and tell me how many cows you can count."

"Why, three, of course," said Private G. cheerily.

The Sergeant began to splutter.

"Why, you good-for-nothing, God-forsaken, rascally young swab, there isn't a cow in sight! Now, you stand here and tell me the truth. Can you see the target?"

Private G. threw down his rifle sulkily. "You've played a dirty, low-down trick on me, Sergeant," he said. "Of course I can't. What's a bit of a thing like that at a quarter of a mile? But I know whereabouts it is."

"You can't see it, sir!" roared the Sergeant. "But 'you know whereabouts it is'! And you've been peppering into space, and wasting the Company's ammunition. Why didn't you say you were blind, you infernal booby and idiot?"

"Blind! I ain't no more —— blind than wot you are," was the reply. "I can see the —— field down there, and one's always got a chance."

So they sent him to an oculist, and the Captain paid for his glasses, with the result that Private G. sees no more cows round the target, and managed to qualify as "second class."

A VOLUNTEER IN BARRACKS

THERE died last autumn in Chichester a veteran Colonel who was known to have a very soft spot in his heart for old soldiers in distress. The consequence was that the number of so-called "old soldiers" who found themselves in Chichester in need of assistance, and made application to the Colonel, increased at such a rate that to save himself the trouble of catechising each applicant as to what regiment he had been in, and under whom he had served, the Colonel would say—

"You are an old soldier, are you? Very well. Take hold of this," handing him the first convenient article that presented—a walking-stick, a broom-handle, or a garden-rake.

Then, standing erect with arms at side, his feet at an angle of 45 degrees, the Colonel would give the order: "Squad—attention! Slope arms! Present arms! Slope arms! Order arms!" and so on, through the various rifle exercises.

It frequently happened that the first word of command was enough to prove the applicant an impostor, and the irate Colonel would exclaim—

“You an old soldier, and don’t know how to ‘order arms’! Out of my house, you rascal, before I give you in charge for the rogue and vagabond that you are!”

If, however, the applicant handled the improvised weapon correctly, and was at least old soldier enough to know his rifle exercises, the Colonel would question him as to his former regiment, length of service, etc., and, if the case proved to be genuine, would find a day’s work for him, give him two or three square meals and send him off with kindly words of sympathy and encouragement and a round sum of money in his hand.

I have often thought what a fine subject it would make for a painter—the grizzled old Colonel standing erect in hall, garden, or billiard-room, glaring at some unhappy tramp who had tried to pass himself off as a soldier, and by the very way he took hold of a rake, a walking-stick, or a broom-handle had proved himself the impostor that he was. Or, as a companion picture, the Colonel looking approvingly at the veteran who, fallen on evil days, and, forgotten by an ungrateful country, had, by the smart way in which he handled

his substitute for a rifle, proved to the old officer to whom he had come for assistance that here at least was a case for further inquiry and probably for substantial help.

I was reminded of this story as I drove past the gates and by the Guard House of Chichester Barracks to be attached for the time being to the Regular Army. I suppose I ought not to say so, but in view of the fact that nominally, at least, the Volunteer Force exists only for Home Defence, I cannot help feeling that for me, a Volunteer, to annex and to sport the badge of a Regiment in the Regular Army—a badge which recalls “Louisburg,” “Quebec,” “Maida,” “Egypt,” “Nile,” “Abu Klea,” and “South Africa”—is what at Rugby is still, I believe, called “calm.” The honours of “South Africa” we Volunteers *have* a right to claim, seeing that the Royal Sussex sent out no less than three hundred Volunteers and that their Captain, Sir Walter Barttelot, fell while leading them at the engagement of Retief’s Nek. I suppose, too, that what I say about the other honours, which Volunteers are permitted to share without having done anything to win, would apply equally to recruits in the Regular Army who have not yet seen service.

All the same—and though the system by which

Territorialists are entitled to wear the uniform and the badge of the Regiment of the Regular Army whose name they bear, may be an admirable incentive to civilians to enter the Territorial Army and must arouse in them no little *esprit de corps*—I cannot dispossess myself of the feeling that I at least, a civilian, who have seen no service, am obtaining credit under false pretences when I appear in regimentals or speak of myself (as I have in this volume) as a “soldier.” Very likely it is a foolish feeling—temperamental, perhaps, or more likely racial, for, in spite of our seeming assurance, we Irishmen, perhaps because of our sense of humour, are in our heart of hearts diffident and disinclined to take ourselves seriously.

Be that as it may, the fact remains that when the train drew up at Chichester, I could not help feeling—knowing as I did that I was about to be put through my work under the eye of officers in the Regular Army—very much as the tramp impostor must have felt when first called upon to “order,” to “slope,” or to “present” arms by the old Colonel. A Volunteer in a Volunteer Drill Hall, supported and countenanced by the presence of friends who are fellow-volunteers, is all very well. But put that Volunteer all by himself, the only specimen of his

kind, in Barracks among Officers and men of the Regular Army, not a single one of whom he knows, and he will feel, I fancy, very much as the late Leslie Stephen felt when he said (quoting Mark Pattison), "To know what others think of you, take your lowest estimate of yourself in your most depressed moments, and divide by three."

Driving from the station to the Barracks, I had put the case to myself this way:—

"Well, here I am a civilian and, in a military sense, an outsider, coming to inflict myself for a specified length of time upon professional soldiers. They have practically no choice in the matter, for under the present scheme, they have not only to put the civilian up, and to put up with the civilian, but are expected to instruct and to examine him in their own craft. What is the attitude of professionals towards amateurs in other professions? Would actors, authors, lawyers, or architects be pleased to have dumped down upon them an amateur whom they are expected to instruct and to examine in their own craft? Would a doctor talk medicine, or regard as other than a dangerous quack, and impostor, the man who dabbled in the healing art? I fancy not. And I fancy, too, that the military men among whom I am coming will consider—and small blame

to them—this billeting upon them of unknown civilians as an imposition and bore.”

Never was I more mistaken, and if I dilate at what may seem to some of my readers too great a length upon the kindness and cordiality of a Volunteer's reception in Barracks, it is only because I wish to reassure other Volunteer officers who may feel as diffident as I. From the moment that the cab drew up at the Mess Room door, and Captain S—— came hurrying with outstretched hand to welcome the new-comer, to carry him off to show him his quarters, and to introduce him to the officer in command of the Depôt, to the Adjutant, and to the other officers upon the Depôt strength, that new-comer was greeted and treated as if he had been one of themselves.

Such sneers as I still hear cast at Volunteering and at the Volunteer come, not from the professional soldier, but from a certain class of civilians, who count the preaching at their own particular chapel as of more importance than the safety of the Empire. No one knows better than the Army man that one battalion of Regulars can effect more than a Brigade of Volunteers, whose training under the old system was hopelessly inadequate, and even under the new system leaves much to be desired. But so patriotic are Army men generally, so alive

to the necessities of National Defence, that they are more than ready to welcome and to do all in their power to instruct and to assist the Volunteer. If Mr. Haldane's scheme succeed, as I earnestly hope it may, the success will be everywhere ascribed to Mr. Haldane, to the Territorialists, and to the patriotism of the country; and we shall probably hear very little of the splendid stimulus, assistance, and encouragement which have been given to Volunteering by the patriotic response and co-operation of the Army.

I hold no brief for the Army: I speak of things merely as I find them; but since I was granted a commission I have availed myself of every opportunity which offered (and my opportunities were not few) of meeting and mixing with Army men; and in nearly every case the conclusion at which I arrived was one and the same. Of the Army, as it was before the Boer War, I cannot speak, but this I do know, that whereas on the troopships and steamers going out to South Africa at the beginning of the war, the number of men who excused themselves from participation in the social life of the ship, on the score that they wished to study, was not great—and those men were not always the most popular—these conditions were entirely reversed after the com-

mencement of the war, and have continued to be so ever since.

Heavy as was the loss of money, deplorable as was the loss of life in the Boer War, I am not sure—in spite of what Mr. Stead and his following may say—that, from the point of view of the welfare of the Empire, the Boer War was not worth all it cost. The magnificent patriotic response which it called forth, not only in this country, but from the Colonies, was an object lesson to Europe and to the world of what England was capable in her hour of extremity, and I venture to express the belief that the Boer War may save the nation more money and more life than it cost, by causing other and unfriendly nations to think twice before exasperating England beyond endurance. Out of evil, good may thus come : out of bloodshed, peace.

That one result of the struggle in South Africa has been to fire the Army, especially the officers, with new enthusiasm for their work, and has caused closer and more constant study of the difficult Science of War, I am positive. Certain society journals and newspapers would have us to believe that brains, the capability for hard work, and a burning desire for the good of the Service, count, in the Army, for less than social qualifications and readiness to participate in

regimental games and sports. My experience, such as it is, points all the other way. So far from agreeing with those who assert that the number of officers who are keen on their soldiering, who study scientifically the Art of War and throw themselves wholeheartedly into their work, is small, I unhesitatingly assert that the men who work are the rule, and that the slackster—though slacksters there are, of course, as in every profession—is the rare exception.

BARRACKS: ON PARADE

A MORE complete change than for a civilian to find himself in Barracks and awakened each morning at half-past five as I was by the bugle sounding "reveille" could hardly be imagined.

On the mornings when I was on parade at half-past six, I was very glad to be thus effectually awakened, but on Saturday mornings, when there was no parade, and I had hoped to have my sleep out, the expressions I used about the bugle were by no means words of blessing. To my thinking reveille is the most "representative" and musical of the bugle-calls—just a little reminding any one who is disposed to be fanciful, and to go far for his similes, of the ripple of running water heard in the first grey stillness of the dawn, before the rest of the busy world is awake. But at Chichester, at least, there is no getting away from it. You hear it sounding, first of all, in the corner of the parade ground furthest from the officers' quarters, and not sufficiently loud to be disturbing. Were that all, one might

turn over and go to sleep again. But the bugler means to have you up and out of bed, and as a lusty cockerel, strutting about the farmyard in the early hours of the morning, flings abroad his shrill challenge to the world, so the bugler crosses to another and then another corner of the parade ground to repeat the call, and possibly to deliver a final blast outside your own door.

Officers who live in Barracks tell me that they get used to reveille, and that when there is no need for them to be up betimes, it does not disturb them; but a civilian—this civilian, at all events—only begins to get used to it when his sojourn in Barracks is nearing an end, and for him, at first, there is no more sleep.

Up he jumps to tub, to shave and to get into the uniform which his manservant has neatly laid out for him overnight. To a civilian, after his first week in Barracks, there is a certain strangeness, even in losing the strangeness of uniform, for it becomes to him at last as much a matter of course to get into uniform, as, in his civilian life, to put on a clean shirt.

He dresses to the accompaniment of the far-off shuffling of feet on gravel. The different companies are falling in on their own muster ground, where the

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roll-call is read and they are numbered and formed into fours before being marched off to the place of assembly on the parade ground proper.

Then the civilian, who is possibly lathering himself for a shave, wonders, on his first morning in Barracks, at least, what is the cause of the persistent *scrunch, scrunch, scrunch*, as regular and monotonous as if some wheel-turned flail were beating time on the gravel path. Possibly he pulls aside the blind to look out of the window, and sees the companies go swinging by at the double.

It is so that the soldier begins his day at Chichester, and though a Volunteer Officer attached to the Regular Army is not required to participate in this early morning run, the Volunteer, of whom I am writing, did so on several occasions of his own choice, and found himself infinitely the fitter for it.

Splendid, however, as it is as a physical exercise, and as training for a "charge," or for the time when reinforcements must be brought up quickly and at the double, it is somewhat trying to run, in the early hours of the morning and upon an empty stomach. It need not be on an empty stomach, for if the morning be damp or chilly, the men are allowed and, in fact, are advised to fortify themselves with a cup of coffee. In some cases this is very necessary.

A newly joined recruit, whom the fine physical training of the Army has not as yet had time to bring up to the required standard, and whom perhaps indoor civilian life has left a trifle soft and flabby, finds that to run early in the morning is too much for him, and it is no uncommon occurrence for one of the runners to turn faint and to fall out. After half an hour of this double-marching the men are halted for first parade. This is a somewhat informal function, consisting as it does principally of recruit-drilling, while the older soldiers are in the gymnasium shed. But a lot of work, and good work, is got through; and very glad I was on my first morning to have what I might call a drill-equivalent to a "sighting-shot," while the officers of the Depôt were not looking on. The Adjutant, Captain B——, D.S.O., assuming that a civilian would not be accustomed to start work at the early hour of 6.30, had very considerably arranged matters for me with the Commanding Officer, and told me on my arrival that I was on duty at the second and third, but was excused from attending the first parade.

"It is very good of you, sir," I said; "but with the C.O.'s and your own permission I do not propose to miss a single parade that it is possible for me to attend."

Nor did I, and very glad I was that first morning that I had elected to be at the half-past six turn-out.

The first time a Volunteer recruit officer is put to drill men under the eye of officers of the Regular Army, he may, I think, be pardoned for being nervous. He feels, in fact, like a young barrister rising in court to speak on his first brief, like a curate preaching his first sermon, or like a newly-elected M.P. the first time he catches the Speaker's eye and stands up to address the House.

On this, my first morning in Barracks, I was not a little relieved, therefore, to find that I was the only commissioned officer present at first parade, and was, indeed, "in command," which I had not realised until returning the salute of the Sergeant-Major, who came up to report: "All reported present on parade, sir."

Hence I had an opportunity, of which I was glad to avail myself, of drilling men in the Regular Army without being embarrassed by the fact that critical eyes were upon me.

I had to face that ordeal at the second parade, but thanks to the singular consideration of my Commanding Officer and the Adjutant, I was allowed to start work without knowing that I was under inspection. I was what the Americans call well "on time" when

I walked over from my quarters to the parade ground—arrayed in my “Sam Browne” belt, which (like a policeman’s striped wristband) is the sign that he is on duty. (The belt in question was so called, I may mention, after its originator, the late Sir Samuel Browne, Field-Marshal and V.C.)

Very imposing the troops looked, drawn up ready for inspection, and standing at ease until the barrack clock was at the exact tick of the half-hour. Then, as I knew, the bugle would sound, and the heels of the companies on parade would come together as regularly as a piece of clockwork, and with a resounding click as—with the ceasing of the last note of the bugle—every man on parade would spring to “attention.” I glanced apprehensively around and breathed a sigh of relief when I saw that no officer was in sight, and that I had nothing more formidable to face than the stolid, uninterested look on the faces of the men, and the friendly and sustaining presence of the Sergeant-Major.

Then I settled down to my work. (I need not here describe it in detail; every Volunteer knows the order of procedure, and those who do not know, would only be bored by technicalities they do not understand.) I had got the men on the move, and was engaged in “increasing front” when I was suddenly, and for the

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first time, conscious of the fact that the Commanding Officer and the Adjutant were strolling up and down outside the Orderly Room, deep, apparently, in discussing some matter of extreme urgency, for neither of them as much as looked my way or, indeed, appeared in any way to take notice of what was happening on parade. That they *did* see, and *did* notice everything, down to the most insignificant detail, I had reason afterwards for knowing when the moment came for criticism and correction, but at the time their apparently total disregard of my doings or misdoings—purposely assumed as it was out of fine and singular consideration for the excusable nervousness of a beginner—helped me through, gave me confidence, and set me at my ease.

A Volunteer Officer attached to the Regular Forces for instruction and for examination in proficiency, is undergoing his examination on the first day, and on every day, of his stay in Barracks. Not only his knowledge and his aptness for the work, his word of command, and his manner of standing when giving that word of command, but also his consideration or want of consideration for the men, his popularity or his unpopularity with them, his manner of conducting himself towards them off parade as well as on it—in a word, his

qualifications as an officer, and his fitness to command a company or a half-company, all come under close and constant observation, and that quite as often when he is unaware of the fact that he is being observed, as when he is aware of it.

BARRACKS: A DAY'S WORK

SOME particulars of a Volunteer's day's work in Barracks may be interesting.

There were three parades every morning, the first being, as I have elsewhere said, mere recruits' drill and physical training. The other two—especially the third—were serious pieces of business, the entire strength of the Depôt being on parade to be practised in every form of drill, in skirmishing, in attack and defence, and, in fact, in the principal movements and tactics of actual warfare, "fire action" being given special prominence on each and every occasion. On Friday there was a more or less ceremonious inspection of all ranks by the Commanding Officer. At this parade—it is the event of the week—the band is present, and the recruits turn out in scarlet tunics.

To describe these functions technically or in detail is unnecessary. Most of my readers have been present when troops—Regular or Auxiliary—have

been inspected and paraded and know what happens, so I will pass on to speak of the day's work as it affects a Volunteer officer attached to the Regular Forces.

Between each parade there is, of course, a break, when the men are dismissed and return to their quarters. In the case of the Volunteer, one, at least, of these breaks is devoted to examination and to private instruction. In my case, as a recruit of only a month or two's standing, my examiners began at the very beginning.

I was taken to the gymnasium shed where, under the Adjutant's eye, the Sergeant-Major ran me through the whole of the Rifle Exercises, that the Adjutant might satisfy himself I could myself execute, with requisite smartness, the various exercises which thereafter I should have to command others to execute. That, however, was only on my first morning. On other mornings the breaks between parade were occupied in examination and instruction in the mechanism of the rifle, in the care of arms, in sighting, in estimating ranges, or in the different methods for testing the accuracy of a soldier's aim, and kindred subjects. When I was put to drill men, certain non-commissioned officers and privates were instructed beforehand to go wrong, this being done, of

course, to see whether I was sufficiently up to my work to detect and correct these errors.

My especial mentor in these matters was the Sergeant-Major, who when there were not enough men at drill to demonstrate how movements could be carried out on a large scale, would produce a number of ropes all of one length. These ropes when held at each end by a private or non-commissioned officer detailed for the purpose, represented sections, half-companies, or companies as the case may be, and were formed into columns, quarter-columns or line and marched or manœuvred for my benefit and as an object lesson in the different movements. When the Sergeant-Major saw that I was tiring, and that he had given me more than enough "rope" to "hang" myself, or, better still, when he saw that I was beginning to literally as well as metaphorically "know the ropes," he would say, "Now, sir, we'll put those bits of clothes-line away, and have a try at another sort of drill for a change."

When the men had fallen in and all was ready, he'd say, "Now, sir, you have got them into column, haven't you? You see that big wide gateway—the one with two brick pillars on either side of it—on your left? Will you take your company through that gateway, sir, if you please, and march them by

the shortest route to the further corner of the militia field on the other side? I have put a man there with sloped arms as a 'marker,' upon whose right, sir, I'll ask you to form them in line."

I looked at the gateway. The tall wooden doors, of which there were two, stood wide open, and I saw that there was room enough, and to spare, to march the men through comfortably in fours. Into fours I accordingly formed them and marched them off, but just as the foremost four was nearing the gateway, one of the doors was inhospitably swung to and bolted by some one on the other side.

"Form two deep!" I called out, seeing my space thus reduced.

Then suddenly the other gate was desolately closed against us, and a door—the sort of thing one sees in stables, so small that only one man could pass through it at a time, and then only by stooping—was as suddenly opened in it.

"Form Single Rank!" I shouted, wondering what would be the Sergeant-Major's next move—for all this was of course done in accordance with instructions he had previously given. As I gave no second word of command, he whispered, "Don't you think, sir, it would be as well for them to trail arms?"

Then I saw the trap into which I had walked.

Men cannot comfortably pass through an aperture, less than their own height, with arms at the slope.

The requisite command to trail arms having been given and the men and myself being through the gateway, I ordered them once again to slope arms and to re-form into fours.

My next business was to discover which way the "marker" was facing, and which would be the shortest route to march my men, so as to form them up in line on his right, and with my original right-hand man in his original place.

While my whole attention was concentrated on this, the Sergeant-Major whispered, "Do you see anything wrong, sir?"

"N-n-n-o. Oh, yes, Sergeant-Major, of course. Thank you very much. There's a man in the second section who's carrying his rifle at the trail instead of at the slope."

"That's it, sir," he chuckled; "I thought we should get it right this time. And now, sir, if you'll halt them and turn them to the right, you'll have them just as you want them, I think."

All this will, of course, seem mere child's play to an old Volunteer, but I have chosen to describe this particular morning's work because it deals with so simple and easy a form of drill that it can be

followed and understood even by those of my readers who have done no drilling.

As I got used to the work, more advanced and severer tests were imposed, the aim of the instruction being not only to test and to sharpen the Volunteer officer's wits, but to accustom him to act upon his own initiative, and to keep an eye not only upon his company as a company, but also upon every individual man. A morning spent thus—especially when one has attended three parades, with private instruction in between, and has started work at half-past six—is tolerably tiring, and I was by no means sorry when the time came to dismiss, and to know that my forenoon's work was done.

After luncheon—before, if he have time—the Volunteer changes into mufti, to motor or to golf, to pay calls, to read, write letters, or otherwise relax. Then comes—at least it was so in my case—another long hour, running more often than not into an hour and a half, with the Sergeant-Major, who visited me in my quarters to instruct me in the Art of War. Many a bloody conflict have I waged with the dear old Sergeant-Major upon the battlefield of the table in my quarters, the casualties (in lucifer matches) being exceptionally heavy. He and I have sat at opposite ends of that table with whole boxes of

matches set out to represent sections, companies, or battalions, as the case may be, until floor and table alike were littered with the bodies of the slain. I have played the War Game of Kriegspiel under the eye of a distinguished soldier with as many medals on his breast as there were battalions engaged, and when the casualties were serious; I took part (while in camp) in the desperately fought Battle of Dover, and indeed had the melancholy pleasure next morning of reading in the *Sussex Daily News* that—"The casualties were heavy. Among those killed being Lieut. Coulson Kernahan, who fell while leading his company in a charge against a strongly entrenched position of the enemy," but never have I witnessed conflicts in which the carnage was so awful and where blood flowed so freely, as in those desperate encounters with the Sergeant-Major in my own quarters.

By the time the issue of the conflict had been finally decided, and the dead, dying, and living had been inhumanly tumbled back together into the sandpaper-sided coffins, thoughtfully provided by Messrs. Bryant & May, my manservant would appear with a can of hot water, and to lay out my mess uniform, or—if, as often happened, I was dining out—my civilian evening-dress suit. Of the attrac-

tiveness and charm of the social life in barracks, I do not propose to speak, seeing that I was there practically as a guest ; but this I may at least say—that if every Territorialist be so fortunate in his hosts (and, I may add, in his hostesses) as I was, I can at least promise him a delightful time.

THE ORDERLY OFFICER

MY first appearance in the rôle of Orderly Officer was, I fear, somewhat *disorderly*, inasmuch as I was guilty of grave dereliction of duty. The "Orders" for the week are issued at Chichester not on Saturday but on Monday night, the reason being, I suppose, that as officers are occasionally away on leave for the week-end, it is convenient to commence their duties on the morning after their return.

"Why were you not at issue of rations?" I was asked on the morning of the Tuesday after my arrival.

The question was put to me in the Mess Smoking-Room by one of the officers as I came out from breakfast.

"Issue of rations!" I said. "I didn't know I had to be there."

"You're supernumerary Orderly Officer for the week," was the reply.

"Am I? I'm very sorry, but I didn't know it. Nobody told me."

"It's in 'Orders'; they're issued every Monday night. That's the Orders book on the table outside there. Every officer should acquaint himself with Orders as soon as they are issued."

I opened the book and read—

"Supernumerary Orderly Officer for the week, Lieut. Coulson Kernahan, 1st V.B."

"I'm really very sorry," I repeated. "I wasn't told about the book, and so did not know, or I'd have been at the issue of rations. I hope that it hasn't——"

"No," I was interrupted—a twinkle in the speaker's eye. "No, the men won't go entirely dinnerless through your dereliction of duty. It's all right, and I'm only chaffing you. I am Orderly Officer and was there myself. If I'd wanted to be away for any reason, I should, of course, have told you, who are my supernumerary. But as you are to be Orderly Officer yourself next week, with full responsibilities, you had better come with me when I'm on my rounds, so that I can put you up to what you ought to know of the work."

To act as Orderly Officer in barracks is a useful experience to a Volunteer, bringing him as it

necessarily does into direct contact with the men, and enabling him to see something of their daily life. He inspects rations every morning previous to issue, examining the meat and bread that he may certify that they are of proper weight and quality, and that the fat and bone of the meat are fairly apportioned between the different companies. Twice a week he must visit the Dining Halls, when the men are at breakfast or dinner—a Non-Commissioned officer being detailed to act as his Orderly. Arrived at the Dining Hall, the Non-Commissioned Orderly raps twice smartly on the door with his cane, and calls the men to attention by announcing "Orderly Officer!"

All conversation instantly ceases, the men lay down knife and fork, and sit bolt upright in their chairs or on the forms, staring stolidly in front of them while the Officer walks the length of the room to see that everything is as it should be and to receive complaints. Not wishing to stand between these good fellows and their dinner, I made it a rule to get in and out of the dining-room with as little delay as possible with the discharge of my duties. The Volunteer's duties do not end there, for as Orderly Officer he is required twice a week to inspect the Cook House, to satisfy himself of its sanitary con-

dition, and to see that the cooking utensils are bright and clean. Twice a week also he must make the rounds of the Canteens, the Ablution-rooms and the Institutions, and must call daily at the Picquet, ascertain from the Commander of the Picquet that all is correct and that the prisoners have received their proper meals. He must personally visit the prisoners in the Guard Room and Cells every day, and, if zealous in the discharge of his duties, he will arrange to pay the Guard House a surprise visit, preferably at night; and when his week's work is done, he must send in a report to the Adjutant, certifying that all these duties have been performed, and giving full particulars of the various parades which he has attended.

The wife of an enthusiastic Volunteer of my acquaintance tells me that while acting as Orderly Officer in barracks, he took his inspection of the Canteen, Cook House, and Ablution-rooms so seriously, and became so infected with a passion for cleanliness, and for having a place for everything and everything in its place, that he attempted to introduce military methods into the domestic circle, and appointed himself Orderly Officer to the establishment.

On the first Monday morning after his return from

barracks he started—armed with a small cane—to make a complete inspection of all parts of the house. Beginning with a lumber-room under the roof, he made quite alarming discoveries in regard to the risk to health which they had all been running by the accumulation of dust in the corners. “Absolutely disgraceful!” he exclaimed. “It’s a wonder we haven’t all got fever. There’s no such hotbed for breeding germs as accumulated refuse. Call the Orderly Sergeant—I mean call the housemaid, and have it cleared away at once.”

Then he descended to the bedroom, and his experience in barracks having taught him something of the dodges of slovenly recruits, who “clear up,” when hearing that the Orderly Officer is coming round, by thrusting anything which is unpresentable out of sight—he prodded every likely place of concealment with his cane, and ended by poking the same cane up the chimney to see that nothing had been stowed away there. The result was a heavy downfall of soot, out of which he made capital as affording sufficient proof of the necessity for some such inspection, and out of which his wife made a grievance on the score of the spoiling of the carpet.

Then he descended to the kitchen with the laudable intention of satisfying himself, as had been his

duty in barracks, of the cleanliness of the cooking utensils. But admirable Orderly Officer as he was, he proved to be a poor general, for he forgot, when planning out beforehand his campaign of cleanliness, the all-important fact that—whereas, in barracks, the cook and kitchen hands were men—the cook who commanded his own kitchen was a woman. After a brief but sanguinary engagement, he suffered a total and crushing defeat, and was subjected to so terrible a fire in the shape of expressions of opinions about the necessity for masters minding their own business, and not poking their noses into other people's kitchens, that he fell back in disorder to the hall, whither he was so hotly pursued by the now excited enemy that he fled at last for cover and protection to his room. Here he was compelled to remain with locked door and in a state of siege, being subjected meanwhile to a withering fire of adjectives through the keyhole, and it was not until he had signalled through to the police station for reinforcements, by means of his telephone, that the siege could be raised, and the mutiny in his own camp quelled by the ejection—minus a month's notice—of the besieging force.

I understand that he has not since repeated the experiment, and has come to the conclusion that, excellent as is the system of inspection by an Orderly

Officer as practised in barracks—in civilian life and in the domestic circle the work can be less capably, if more agreeably, done by the appointment of his wife or some other woman to the position of Deputy or Supernumerary Orderly Officer to the establishment.

IN AND OUT OF BARRACKS AND SALUTES

MY name as Orderly Officer for the week appeared in "Orders" on Monday night, but so absorbed was I when on parade next morning in trying to remember that in one formation my word of command must be: "Company Column on the leading section, Remainder Left Incline—Double March," and in another: "Right Section to the Front, Remainder Right Wheel," that I failed to notice the clock had passed the hour when I was due on Orderly Officer work at some other part of the barracks. I was reminded of the fact by seeing the Orderly Sergeant, who attends the Commissioned Orderly Officer on his rounds, standing at attention two paces away from me.

"Beg pardon, sir," he said, saluting, "but they're waiting for you to inspect rations."

When I say that I was dismayed at the thought of my forgetfulness, and that I dismissed parade (the hour's drilling was just up) with more dispatch than

dignity, to repair with all speed to the ration shed, I shall perhaps be thought by some readers to be taking things more seriously than was necessary. To them it may seem a small matter for an officer to keep his subordinates waiting five minutes to suit his convenience, but at Chichester no such laxity is allowed, and had it happened more than once, and come to the ears of the Commanding Officer, I should in all probability have found myself in—and rightly—for a reprimand.

The rule there is that it is no less inexcusable for an officer to be late on parade or in the fulfilment of some duty, timed to take place at a certain hour, than for one of the rank and file; nor must an officer on duty allow himself any licence which is not permitted to the men. If, for instance, he is marching his company out into the country on manœuvres, and halts them for a few minutes' rest, he must not indulge in the luxury of a pipe, cigar, or cigarette until permission to smoke has been accorded to the rank and file, nor on a chilly morning must he allow himself the comfort of a great-coat unless the men are similarly protected.

That, at least, is the rule at Chichester; and "Tommy," who has a fine sense of justice and knows that he is being treated with fairness as well as with

consideration, is not greatly inclined to grumble at the severity of the discipline which is maintained.

I had proof of the kindness with which, not only Tommy, but Mrs. Tommy, is treated, when, as happened on more than one occasion, I accompanied the Commanding Officer on his weekly inspection of all parts of the barracks. If anything had been neglected, if there were signs of slovenliness or dirt, the party or parties responsible were brought to book with such sharpness that there was small likelihood of a repetition of the offence. But if, on the other hand, everything was exceptionally ship-shape, sweet, and clean, the words of approval and encouragement were not withheld.

"How pretty your window boxes look, Mrs. So-and-so," the Commanding Officer would say, touching his cap to the wife of one of his men when on his round of inspection of the Married Quarters, and invariably uncovering if he had occasion to enter the house. At the next place of call, if the children happened to strike one as clean and well cared for, a kindly passing word of comment on their bonny looks would leave the proud mother happy for a week. Next door; possibly, there was, on the contrary, a sick child, in which case the Commanding Officer would come charged with some kind message

from his wife, and a promise that she would herself be in that afternoon, to see if anything could be done to aid towards recovery or to lessen pain. And so on, with here a moment's stoppage to pat the rosy cheek of a baby child, and there a quaintly put question about the name of a pet rabbit or a doll or a bird, but everywhere with an eye for the clean and sanitary housing, for the health and welfare and comfort, of every one under his command or under his control.

As a consequence the relations between officers and men at Chichester are so pleasant that even a volunteer officer, attached temporarily to the barracks, finds himself treated with ceremonious respect. He is accorded—at least, I was—exactly the same outward respect and obedience which are accorded to officers in the Regular Army, and is saluted both by Non-Coms. and by the men, not only in barracks, but even when he is in mufti in the town. That it is not so everywhere, I am well aware, for soldiers, meeting a Volunteer officer whom they do not know, or even whom they know, are by no means disposed to go out of their way to pay him what are known as compliments.

On the contrary, a great many of them go out of their way to avoid according him the salute, to

which, by the regulations, he is now entitled, but that is a matter which does not greatly trouble me. As a question of discipline, and since their instructions are that the King's Commission is always and everywhere to be saluted, in the person of the holder, whether Regular or Volunteer, the order ought, no doubt, to be enforced. But knowing as I do that every soldier gets more than enough of saluting in his day's work, I should—were I, for instance, waiting for a train when I was in uniform, and when soldiers were on the platform—purposely and carefully keep out of their way. One of my reasons for so doing is that I should not unnecessarily wish to put them to the trouble of rising, if seated, or of being called to attention by the senior soldier, if standing, for the express purpose of saluting an officer. The other reason is that, though I do not care one straw whether I, personally, be saluted or not saluted, I do care very much for the respect which is due to the King's Commission as represented by the uniform of an officer, and so should not wish to subject the King's Commission to the possibility of being slighted, by coming within saluting distance of soldiers whom it would be just as easy and as convenient for me to avoid.

AFTER BARRACKS

“YOU’LL have learned a lot of things when you come back from Barracks,” said the youngest but one subaltern to me on the eve of my departure.

Ah! for the optimism of youth! One of the lots of things which I learned while in Barracks was what a lot of things there were to learn. But I thought none the less of the handsome boy for his optimism, and, indeed, could have envied a very young and just-joined junior subaltern Territorialist of my acquaintance who, after a fortnight’s instruction at the Depôt of his regiment, complained to me, on his return, of the old-fashioned ways of his Sergeant-Major (a most capable soldier who has been through three campaigns, I understand), and said that now he had lived in Barracks and knew something of the real thing, he meant to do his best to smarten up the — old Sergeant-Majors to Volunteer Regiments.

Personally, I can only say that I returned from Barracks newly conscious of the debt which we

Volunteers owe to the officers and non-commissioned officers of the Regular Army who are serving in Volunteer Battalions.

For an officer in the Army to act as Adjutant to a Volunteer Battalion means not only that the chances of distinguishing himself are small (in itself a disheartening fact to an able and ambitious soldier), but also (and this is something of a hardship, if the Adjutant be young) that he is more or less losing touch with the Regular Forces, and must go back, when his adjutancy is up, almost as a stranger to his own Regiment and to his own men.

The Sergeant-Major, on the other hand, is generally a time-expired man, who is not likely, no matter how hard he work, to win further promotion. It would not be very surprising if such a man, finding himself, somewhat late in life, in such circumstances, were content merely to do his duty, to do what was necessary to ensure his pension and his pay, and were not greatly to concern himself about the progress made by recruits.

That Adjutants and Sergeant-Majors to Volunteer Battalions work laboriously and energetically to bring the battalion with which they are connected up to the highest possible pitch of efficiency, seems to me a weighty testimony to the patriotic spirit and the

devotion to duty, which I have so repeatedly spoken of as animating the Army.

Looking back on what I have written in the various chapters of this little book, I fully realise that some readers will think me an incurable optimist who is bent on seeing and saying the best that can be seen and said of both lines of the Imperial Army.

I reply, as I have replied before, that I write of things in the Regular Army as I found them. A work like this has no excuse for existence unless it be an honest record of actual, if very small, experience. The facts are as I state, and, as facts, carry their own weight. The opinions are merely mine, and, as such, carry none. The relationship in which I stand to the reader (and it must be remembered that I am writing not for Volunteers; I have nothing new or noteworthy to tell *them*, but to Non-Volunteers) is that of a man who is learning to ride, to a man who has never been on horseback at all. It is as if the reader, seeing me come out of a riding-school, had said, "Oh, I say! Do you know anything about riding? I don't; but I have sometimes thought of taking the thing up, and I'd like to hear what some other fellow thinks." And as if I had replied, "All I know is the A B C of it, but I *have* begun to learn,

which gives me some small advantage over you, who haven't, and as I have been living some weeks in a riding-school, watching how expert riders manage their mounts, getting the benefit of their advice, and taking lessons from them several hours in each day, it is possible that I know just a little more about it than you. I'll tell you the facts as I found them, and you may rely upon them. The opinions I have formed upon these facts, you must take at your own valuation. They may be right or they may be wrong. They may be of some use to you, or they may be worthless. They may be partial, or they may be impartial. The only thing I claim for them is that they are honest."

So, too, in regard to what I say about Volunteering. Here, again, my experience and my knowledge are small, but a man who is as keen upon the work as I am—even if he be a poor soldier himself, and unless he be altogether a fool—can form a tolerably good idea as to what Volunteers as a Fighting force are worth. I am not blind to the fact that in my own battalion there are officers under whom—good fellows as I know them, personally, to be—I should be very sorry to serve in a campaign. But, on the other hand, there are, in the same battalion, at least four men—varying of course in capability—whose know-

ledge is so scientific and thorough, whose grasp of strategy and tactics is so great, and who inspire such confidence in the men under their command, that if ever they are called upon to serve their country and get their chance ("getting his chance" counts for much in a soldier's life), they can scarcely fail to distinguish themselves. It is these men—the Colonel knows exactly of what each officer under his command is capable—who would be put in positions of trust and responsibility in the event of the Volunteers being called out, and had the 1st Volunteer Battalion of the Royal Sussex Regiment done no more than train and turn out such capable officers as these, together with some half-score of non-commissioned officers who could be named, and a certain proportion of the best shots and most efficient soldiers from the rank and file, it would amply have justified its existence.

Whether the standard of merit among other officers in other battalions, all over the country, is equally high, I cannot say. Much, everything, in fact, depends upon the determination of the Commanding Officer to keep back—if possible to get rid of—in-capables, and to push forward the men whose ability he has tested and proved. We—I may, perhaps, be permitted to say—are singularly fortunate in our

Commanding Officer; but if other officers commanding Volunteer Battalions (and there is no reason why it should not be so) have his abilities as a soldier and a leader, and have his power, not only of estimating the merits of the men under his command, but also of getting the best out of those men, the Territorial Army will prove itself, in the event of invasion, an infinitely stronger striking and defending force than even Mr. Haldane in his most sanguine moments has supposed.

SOLDIERING AS A SPORT

I HEARD recently of a young man of means and leisure who, when urged to join the Territorial Army, excused himself on the score that he feared it would "interfere with his games."

I will not call that young man names, for calling names is easy and counts for little, as I realised the other day when a medico and a bank clerk had a slight difference of opinion in a railway compartment in which I was travelling. The bank clerk, with fine contempt, referred to his opponent as a "pill-pedlar," and then sat back in his seat as one who has scored heavily off his opponent, until the prompt retort "shilling-shoveller" made him sit up again in a double sense and left the issue of the wordy duel doubtful.

Instead, therefore, of calling that young man names, I merely reply—

"As if any game that was ever played were half so good a game as soldiering."

"You ought to know," sneers some cynic; "for what is your Volunteering but playing at soldiers?"

Is it? Well, we won't argue the question; but even so, it is, if I may fall back upon slang, a thundering sight better than most. To begin with, there is some risk—and it is a poor sport where the player takes none. It might happen to you—it happened to me—that an enthusiastic citizen-soldier, in the excitement of a sham-fight, let fly a blank cartridge full at his supposed enemy, yourself, while you were only a few yards away, in which case you might chance to find—not a chunk of old red sandstone, but an equally deadly wad of paper "take you," and penetrate into "the abdomen."

That possibly is a kind of game—lives have been lost by the discharge of blank cartridges at close quarters before now—which would not appeal to our friend the young man of whom I have spoken. It might "interfere" with his other "games" to such purpose that I will not pursue the subject, but will merely remark that as he cannot be induced to serve his country, I am putting him to such use as I can, by taking him as a text, and so was at some pains to ascertain what particular game he favoured. The game in question turned out to be football—not playing, mind you, but merely looking on. Frankly, I

should like to interfere with such games as his. Frankly, when I see some ten thousand able-bodied men shouting themselves hoarse over a football match—not playing themselves, not taking any risks in the rough-and-tumble, but merely looking on—I long for the days of the “press-gang.” It was a cruel hardship, no doubt, that, when England was short of men, the press-gang had the power to plan a raid and to carry off, willing or unwilling, as many able-bodied men as were needed to serve their country; but there are times when one could wish for some such short way of dealing with skulkers and loafers. In the *Daily Chronicle* of this morning’s date (January 21st), I see the following paragraph:—

“At last evening’s meeting of the Brighton Distress Committee it was reported by the Chairman of the Labour Bureau Sub-Committee that whilst last week some seventy painters sought for and obtained work, not one had turned up that day.

“A member promptly interjected, ‘They’ve all gone to Chelsea to see Brighton win!’”

Now, I am not so unfair an advocate of soldiering versus football as to pretend that I think, or that the member in question really thought, that the seventy men who had applied for work, but had absented themselves on that particular day, had all gone to see

the Football Match ; and my chief reason for quoting the paragraph is the curious coincidence of its appearing in the papers on the very morning that I am writing to protest against football being accorded a greater place in our national life than soldiering. We will hope that many of the absentees had obtained regular work, and so had no need to apply to the Labour Bureau for employment. Others were absent for equally good and sufficient reasons, but that some of the seventy *did* find the time and raise the necessary funds to journey to London that they might witness one of the events of the football season (the match between Brighton and Preston), I haven't the smallest doubt, especially when I see by the *Daily Telegraph* that no less than twelve hundred football enthusiasts travelled up from Brighton to London that very day.

I know at this moment of a rascal whose wife and children are in receipt of parish relief, but he himself can plank down his sixpence, sometimes once, sometimes twice, a week, according to whether one or two matches are on, to witness every football match that is played in the town in which I reside.

I am an old football player myself, am something of an athlete as well as an enthusiastic sportsman, and

against a man going occasionally to witness a well-played match I have not a word to say, but to so low a pitch has football now sunk in this country that I should not be sorry if it could be stopped by Act of Parliament. A nation of sportsmen we may once have been, but we are fast degenerating into a nation of loafers and lookers-on. Rome, in her worst Gladiatorial days, was not so swiftly moving to natural decay as we.

If there is one man alive who reads, and reads with the eye of genius, the signs of the times and what has been called the "Soul of a people," that man is Mr. Kipling. Turn to such a work as "The Return," or "Chant Pagan" in the *Five Nations*, to mention only two poems, to see how genius can interpret the dumb, inarticulate, almost bovine, movements of the brain of an ordinary Tommy, and can write them out for all to see. It is perfectly true that no typical Tommy ever spoke or ever even consciously thought as Mr. Kipling makes him speak and think. But the thoughts which are shaping, even if unconsciously, somewhere in Tommy's brain, Mr. Kipling has, by the insight of sheer genius, unerringly divined, and his picture of the British soldier is truer to that soldier's true self than even the soldier himself is aware.

And just as Mr. Kipling can read the soul in Tommy, so he can read the signs of the times and the soul of a people, and it was because he saw that what was once the manhood of England now goes a-whoring after the false gods, that are miscalled Sport—just as Babylon of old, before her downfall, went a-whoring after idols—that he wrote so scathingly of “the flannelled fools at the wicket, the muddled oafs at the goal.”

I am told that the writing of these lines did not conduce to Mr. Kipling's popularity in certain quarters, and I, in my small way, have been warned that I shall be well advised to let football alone, and not to injure my own popularity (such as it is) by saying what I think. Though I am not a looker-on at football matches, I am sportsman enough to take the risk of being unpopular in such company; and I say that when I see thousands of young men and boys who would scarcely trouble themselves to cheer the brave fellows who man the lifeboat, or the fireman who risks his own life in trying to save the life of another—when I see these thousands howling themselves hoarse over the paid professionals of the football field, I could wish that the press-gang could make a clean haul of the lot, and carry them off, to train them to defend their country.

Sport—even admitting as I do the heroic joy of smashing the pay-box when the game is not to their liking, or bashing an unlucky umpire who has given a decision by which some of them lose their bets!—what possible sport can there be in paying others to play a game at which so-called sportsmen do nothing except look on? I should like to take the strongest anti-conscriptionist I know to a football field, and show him the sights and the class of men he will see there, and then ask whether the physique, the morals, the manhood of England would not be infinitely improved if these men were compelled to spend the time which they all seem to have to spare—though few of them have time to spare to learn to defend their country—in the drilling, the physical training and the discipline which they would have to undergo in the Army.

It is precisely because I am a sportsman that I feel as I do about the pitch to which football has sunk. It is for that reason that I say to any young fellow who may chance to read these pages, “If you want sport which *is* sport, clean sport, true sport, a man’s sport, come and join us. You will never regret it. If you want comrades, seek them among the men who are unselfish enough and men enough to wish to serve their country. If you want a Club,

where you will meet men with interests identical with your own, you can find it in the Mess Room or the Men's Rooms of your Regiment. You will have sport in plenty, besides Soldiering. My own Battalion runs Clubs for Hockey, Tennis, and other sports, and prizes are freely given, for which men and officers alike compete."

But, most of all, you will have the sport which is over and above all others, the Sport of Sports, the King of Sports, and the Soldiers' Sport—Man-hunting itself. Believe me, that beside that sport, mere fox-hunting seems cowardly and tame. For a pack of ravenously hungry hounds, to say nothing of a field of men and women on horseback and followers on foot, to harry one sneaking, harmless little fox till the poor beaten, breathless beast is like to drop and can run no more, is exciting enough (I am ashamed to confess it), so long as it is merely a matter of the chase. But "the kill" sickens me. I have only witnessed one, but to this day I cannot get over the shock of seeing gentle-faced English girls and refined English gentlewomen sitting their horses smilingly while a scene was being enacted which reminded me of a slaughter-house. A butcher in a red coat (most butchers wear blue coats, but this particular butcher's was red) seized the fox

while the look of conscious life was still in its eyes, hacked off the "mask," the "pads," and the "brush," and then threw the mangled body, smoking hot, to be torn to pieces and devoured before our eyes. I pass over the rite of "bloodying" a young girl fox-hunter who was in at what was her first "kill," as well as mine, and shall assuredly be my last. A fox is a relative of the dog ; and I love my own dog so well, I count him so much my trusted friend and comrade, that I cannot again endure to see a creature with eyes like his, thus hunted down to death and torn to pieces while I look on.

But in man-hunting—if you are playing the game on the battlefield—the fight is a fair one, which it is not in the case of the fox. You may kill, or you may be killed ; and as the stakes are high—your life against your enemy's—the gamble (if you are anything of a gambler) is glorious, and the excitement proportionately intense.

There is no such "big-game hunting" as this ; and even if you are only playing at man-hunting in a sham-fight, you are in such dead earnest—knowing that, what to-day is sham, may to-morrow be sober reality, knowing that it is only by practising the game in peace that you can play it properly in war

—that you lose yourself in the excitement of it, as you lose yourself in no other game that ever was played.

TO THE MAN IN THE STREET

THE other day in Brighton, as I was waiting for a tramcar, a funeral procession approached, and I, as is my custom, uncovered, and stood with my hat in my hand as it passed. Three young fellows were standing near me, and as they did not bare their heads I ventured quite courteously to say: "Won't you uncover, gentlemen? There is a funeral passing." Two out of the three rather sheepishly pulled off their caps. The third turned to me and said insolently, "Who are you to order us about? I shan't do what *you* tell me." "No," I said; "why should you? But you might at least do what good manners, what sympathy for the mourners, to say nothing of respect for the dead, tell you. But in any case it is no business of yours. I didn't address you. I said, 'Won't you uncover, *Gentlemen*?'"

Well, now, if I may be pardoned for going off at a tangent from this incident, to return to it again, I should like to buttonhole my friend, the man in the street, with the following question:—

"If you happened to be within call when some ruffian insulted or actually assaulted your mother, your wife, your sister, your daughter—I won't in this case say *any* woman, though I very well might—what would you do? You would go instantly to her assistance, would you not? If you reply that you should do nothing of the sort, then I waste no more words over you: I say to you, as I said to that lout at Brighton, 'I am not addressing you. This chapter is headed "To the Man in the Street," and to the title of Man you have no right.'"

But knowing as I do that my friend, the man in the street, would make answer that in such circumstances he would go instantly to any woman's assistance, I shall venture to ask him yet one more question.

In the hour when your Mother Country calls to you, her son, to protect her by taking your rifle and joining your fellow-countrymen in driving the invader from her coast, how will you feel if you have to reply, "I can't"?

One man, to whom I put this same question, protested with much blustering that he should be as ready to do his duty as the rest of them, when the time came.

I did not doubt it of him, any more than I doubt it of you, but the fact remains that *it is only by trained*

and organised defence that England and England's women and children can be protected against the invader; and if you neglect to learn to shoot, if you fail to train yourself to take your share in organised defence, you will be practically useless in that hour.

If, when I say that the invasion of England is possible, I were merely giving you *my* opinion, you would have good reason to scoff, but that the invasion of England is possible we have been told over and over again by almost every one who knows the facts. If any man in England may be supposed to know those facts, that man is surely Lord Roberts. This is what he said upon the subject :—

“I know that ninety-nine men out of a hundred, nine hundred and ninety-nine out of a thousand, would say that an invasion cannot take place. We are brought up in this belief and encouraged in it by people who ought to know better. I cannot help thinking that the apathy and ignorance of the people is the most serious danger to this country. Our people know nothing of the horrors of war. War has never been brought home to them. Their battles have been fought for hundreds of years on foreign soil, and with the aid of mercenaries and allies. At home this danger is not realised, and while responsibilities have been increasing, year by year, very few ever trouble their heads how these responsibilities

are to be met. Surely we do not intend to wait for some great national calamity, till a Jena or a Sedan brings home to us the fact of our unpreparedness!"

These are Lord Roberts's words, and if any man in England has a right to expect that heed shall be paid to what he says upon such a subject, that man is the great soldier and patriot, Lord Roberts of Kandahar and Pretoria, Field-Marshal and V.C.

That such a man with such a career behind him could be guilty of panic-mongering is unthinkable. Lord Roberts is, on the contrary, one of the coolest-headed and sanest men of the day, and no one could be farther removed from panic-mongering than he.

If a great doctor warned you solemnly that your child's life was in danger, would you neglect that warning? Yet here is one of the greatest soldiers of our time solemnly warning you of imminent national danger. Are you so criminally indifferent as to pay no heed? Do you realise what the invasion of England would mean to you—to put it merely on purely selfish and unpatriotic grounds? It would so paralyse and injure trade that the probabilities are that you, and thousands like you, would be thrown out of employment for years. Do you understand that an invasion would be followed almost instantaneously by famine, and that your own wife, your own children,

would almost inevitably suffer? Do you realise that every invasion has meant insult and outrage to the women of some households, and that, if England were invaded, the women thus insulted and outraged might be yours? Think of this, my friend, and then ask yourself the question I have already put to you—the question how you will feel in the hour of England's danger if you are unable to take your share in your country's defence. I believe that in that hour you will flinch from meeting the gaze of your own eyes in the glass. They will say, "Look at us! We seem honest eyes, a man's eyes. We can't think that we are the eyes of a make-believe man; but what is the man, to whom we belong, doing here at home, sleeping snugly between sheets, warming himself with the cat and the dog, in a coward's comfort, a craven's security, by the fireside, when other men are facing danger and cold, bullet and bayonet and death, because England's Empire, England's homes, England's children, and England's women are in danger! Don't look at us, hide us away out of sight, lest we see the scorn in the eyes of which we see the reflection, and in the eyes of our womenfolk, and lest the children in the street, the very cat and dog on our hearthrug, cry Shame on us!"

Remember that it is not *I* who am saying all this

to you. The things others say to us, or of us, we can bear, when we know what is said to be undeserved or untrue. It is the things that we are compelled at times to say of ourselves, to ourselves, knowing them to be true, that bring hell and its tortures home to us even in this life, and that can nerve even a coward's hand to pull the trigger which puts the merciful bullet through his brain.

For a man, a brave man, strong in limb and sound in body, to realise that England, and all that England means to him and his, are threatened, and that he, because of his own criminal apathy, cannot shoulder his rifle and go out to fight with his fellows, but must contemptuously be told to stand aside out of the way of the real men, and to get him back to his chimney corner, there to take shelter with the women and children—would to me be a situation too intolerable to be borne.

It is because I realised this, because I felt it to be a man's duty, every man's duty, and my duty, to learn to shoot and to be able to take a place in the ranks, that I joined the Territorial Army.

At forty-nine one likes to take life easily, and is not anxious to accept new responsibilities, or to have to face the physical fatigue, the arduous mental work which even civilian-soldiering entails—to say nothing

of having to make himself ridiculous by standing, a man who is turning grey, among young men and boys to drill in the Awkward Squad. But I did it, and I would undergo it all again, and gladly, if only thereby I could induce my friend, the Man in the Street, to ask himself the question, "Does what this writing chap says apply to me? I wonder!"

AFTERWORD

THAT many will laugh at me for the seriousness with which I write, I am well aware. I do not grudge them any gaiety they make at my expense. So long as they only laugh at me and not at the soldiering, I shall not grumble. To be in earnest is always to make oneself ridiculous in the eyes of somebody. I went into this business with my own eyes open, and with my sense of humour awake, and I have laughed too often at my own antics in the drill hall and elsewhere, to mind greatly that people should laugh at me on other counts. It is good for all of us to come under discipline ; and if my soldiering has taught me nothing else, it has at least taught me to endure ridicule good-temperedly. There is much that every soldier has to grin and bear, and I have an idea that when he has learned to "grin," he is well on his way to learn to "bear," and in time to become a good soldier. It would be a comfort if I could take high ground under ridicule—could strike an attitude and say, "Away with you ! You are they

who hold England's honour, England's safety, and England's manhood lightly, and to such as you I will not condescend to reply." It would be consoling to one's dignity, so to say, but so to say would not be true; for many of those who will differ from me, and who will laugh at me, are every whit as well-meaning, as anxious for England's welfare, and as honest as I. But they are—and this I say with intense conviction—unfortunately, even fatally, blind to England's needs, and to England's danger. How shall it be with them and with England, if the opening of their eyes come only by disaster, and when it is too late?

GOD SAVE THE KING!

A TERRITORIAL SONG

Tune—"THE VICAR OF BRAY"

(It is *not* necessary to obtain permission before singing this song.)

WHEN Good Victoria ruled this land,
Lest England were invaded
The Volunteers, that gallant band,
They mustered and paraded.
They learned to fight, they learned to shoot,
Their aim was true and steady ;
Had foemen come, at roll of drum
Each man had answered "Ready !"

Then give three cheers for the Volunteers,
In "sections," "line," or "fours," Sir,
The Volunteers for fifty years
Safeguarded England's shores, Sir.

Though all must pray that wars shall cease,
Yet after a reverse, Sir,
To bring about inglorious peace
Is but to make things worse, Sir.
When Kruger thought Majuba Hill
Meant we'd enough of war, Sir,
And dared to flout old England's will,
He went a bit too far, Sir.

Then give three cheers for the Volunteers,
In "sections," "line," or "fours," Sir,
In England's need to die or bleed
They sailed for Afric shores, Sir.

When the old lion, dripping blood
From throat and side and belly,
Alone 'mid ravening Boar-hounds stood—
As sounds at morn reveille,

146 AN AUTHOR IN THE TERRITORIALS

"Our mother calls!" went forth the word
To echo wide and wider,
And at one bound the Boar-hounds found
Her lion cubs beside her.

From Canada, Australia,
New Zealand, they came bounding.
The Volunteers went forth with cheers
Old England's foes confounding.

Now Great King Edward rules this land
(No nobler King wore crown, Sir),
The Volunteers *as* Volunteers
No longer come to town, Sir;
For Mr. Haldane boiled them down
(At first they thought it sin, Sir),
*But what came out of his melting pot
Was better than what went in, Sir.*

For this is law, I will maintain,
Until my dying day, Sir,
*That though the Volunteer has gone
The "Terror" has come to stay, Sir.*

The Volunteers were true and tough,
No foe were they afraid of,
But 'tis the same old fighting stuff
The Territorial's made of.
He knows his work, he's learned to shoot,
His aim is straight and steady;
Let foemen come, at roll of drum
Each man will answer "Ready!"

Then give three cheers for the Volunteers
And the Territorial Army;
While *that's* your Second Fighting Line,
Old England, none can harm ye!

The first, fourth, and fifth verses appeared originally in *Punch*, to the Editor and Publishers of which the writer is indebted for permission to reprint.

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